AN HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN POST-REVOLUTIONARY CUBA

Volume I

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis consists entirely of my own work and that it has been composed by myself.

Adrienne Hunter

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Edinburgh, Scotland.
October 31, 1988.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CDE = Centro de Desarrollo Educativo (Centre for Educational Development)

CNIC = Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Cientificas (National Scientific Research Centre)

CIDA = Canadian International Developmental Agency

CUJAE = Ciudad Universitaria José Antonio Echeverría (José Antonio Echeverría University City). This was the faculty of technology of the University of Havana, and after 1976 became known as ISPJAE.

CUSO = Canadian University Service Overseas

FAO = Food and Agricultural Organization

ICCP = Instituto Central de Ciencias Pedagógicas (Central Institute of Pedagogical Sciences)

IDRC = International Development Research Council

IPA = International Phonetics Association

ISCA = Instituto Superior de Ciencias Animales (Higher Institute of Animal Sciences)

ISCM-H = Instituto Superior de Ciencias Médicas de la Habana (Higher Institute of Medical Sciences of Havana)

ISE = Instituto Superior de Educación (Higher Institute of Education)

ISPEJV = Instituto Superior Pedagógico Enrique José Varona (José Enrique Varona Higher Pedagogical Institute)

ISPJAE = Instituto Superior Politécnico José Antonio Echeverría (José Antonio Echeverría Higher Polytechnic Institute). Until 1976, ISPJAE was known as CUJAE.

ISPLE = Instituto Superior Pedagógico de Lenguas Extranjeras (Higher Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages)

JUCEPLAN = Junta Central de Planificación (Central Planning Board)

MES = Ministerio de Educación Superior (Ministry of Higher Education)

MINCEX = Ministerio de Comercio Exterior (Ministry of Foreign Trade)

MINED = Ministerio de Educación (Ministry of Education)

MINSAP = Ministerio de Salud Pública (Ministry of Public Health)

OISE = Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

UNDP = United Nations Development Plan

WHO = World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

This thesis traces the history of a ten-year period (1972-1982) in the teaching of English to engineers and engineering students at the Higher Polytechnic Institute José Antonio Echeverría (ISPJAE - Instituto Superior Politécnico José Antonio Echeverría) in Havana, Cuba. (1)

It is essentially the story of the search for improved teaching methods, culminating in the development, dissemination and implementation in Cuba of a communicative approach to English language teaching.

The Canadian author of this thesis, who introduced the approach in Cuba in 1975 and who took part in the entire decade-long project, has chosen to present a detailed report on the pedagogical and organizational aspects of the experience, as well as the conflicts which emerged in the face of new ideas.

The author believes that the project is worthy of an exhaustive treatment because of the importance of its lessons for foreign English-language advisers working in other developing nations, and for scholars doing research in Applied Linguistics.

The thesis, which presents a chronology of events, includes a survey of the history of English language teaching in Cuba from the early part of the twentieth

century, situating its most recent development against the background of the island's general educational growth since the 1959 Revolution. It examines the Cuban-Canadian relationship in the field of English language teaching, and surveys the major English language courses for Cuban engineers, engineering students, and language teachers which were given during the ten years under scrutiny. In addition, it discusses in detail the two-year field study carried out between 1980 and 1982 whose objective was to influence the approach to be used in new textbooks for engineering students throughout the 1980's.

For those who are interested in broader brush strokes, without a surfeit of detail, Chapter Seven, the Conclusions chapter, offers selective facts and judgements that might satisfy their interest. Others, it is hoped, will find the more thorough description instructive.

To avoid the pitfall of not seeing the forest for the trees, it should not be forgotten -- as one reads the details -- that the main thrust of the project was the search for ever more effective English teaching methods and the eventual struggle to substitute a scientifically sounder and more advanced communicative approach for traditional methods.

The formulation "the struggle to substitute" is chosen

advisedly. It will not escape the reader's notice that there arose strong resistance to a large-scale implementation of the approach from some influential language policy-makers.

In retrospect, the story of how the new approach finally became consolidated is encouraging. But those of us who were involved in the day to day work over a decade cannot help but recall the periods of disappointment, tension, and frayed nerves when obstacles blocked the way. What justified the effort was the need to prove in practice that change is possible in spite of skepticism and determined opposition.

One of the factors that ultimately made the ISPJAE Project meaningful was the scope of its influence. The approach to English language teaching that was developed at ISPJAE has been applied at all the nation's engineering schools, which in 1985 had a total enrolment of over 32,000. (2)

Furthermore, the success of the experimental work at ISPJAE, along with courses given concurrently to English teachers, helped to spread new ideas and trends in language teaching to other sectors of education during and after the ten-year period covered by the thesis. Some of these programmes have gone on to surpass the achievements at ISPJAE.

The thesis ends with an Epilogue that examines the status of the communicative approach six years after the ISPJAE Project ended in 1982. It evaluates the lasting effects of the project through a description of the progress made at other institutions of higher learning. It touches on the all-important introduction of the first master's-level programme for English teachers -- offered at the Higher Institute of Medical Sciences in Havana -- which stresses the theoretical bases of communicative language teaching and their practical application in the classroom. Such a programme augurs well for even further development and dissemination of a communicative approach at all levels of English teaching in Cuba.

A word about the term "communicative approach". Although this is explained throughout the body of the text, it may be helpful to offer the reader a preliminary gloss of the term.

The concept of communicative language teaching has evolved considerably over the years as more experimentation is undertaken in the classroom, and as knowledge is increased in those fields which have influenced modern-day language teaching, such as Discourse Analysis, Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics, Communication Theory, etc. Moreover, since the approach came into vogue, the term has been used to describe all manner of courses and methodologies to the point of

making its meaning vague, and at times, confusing. In addition, like many things that catch on and become fashionable, it has been used superficially and even for commercial purposes.

Using the Canale and Swain (1980) paradigm of four competences (grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic competence) as a definition of communicative competence, we can say that "the communicative approach", as it was applied in the ISPJAE Project, reflected the restricted use of the term in the 1970's, and only drew on the first two of the four categories.

Furthermore, grammatical and discourse competence meet the principal requirements of Cuban professionals, whose aim in studying English is essentially to deal with the written language and to develop reading fluency. Even in cases where oral fluency is the desired goal, the main need is for a standardized "transactional" type of language as opposed to "interactional" talk, the distinction made by Brown and Yule (1983A). This is so because of the use of English for the exchange of information in such fields as science and technology, trade and commerce, and international affairs.

The remaining categories in the Canale and Swain model -- sociolinguistic and strategic competence -- are therefore not so extensively represented in the work under study,

partly because they are not overly relevant in a Third World country like Cuba, and also because these two aspects were not well developed in the 1970's.

Sociolinguistic competence, particularly when it is related to appropriacy in the spoken language, does, however, become relevant in a field like tourism, where employees in the various branches of the industry come into contact with native English-speakers in informal, interactional situations. An awareness of its importance in this field was only beginning to take hold by 1988.

As for strategic competence, the ideas behind this type of competence, although very interesting, did not have great application to language teaching at the time of the study and still do not seem, to this author, to be as well-defined or as relevant as the other three competences.

The author hopes that this survey of a ten-year project in Cuba will not only ignite a spark of recognition in foreign language specialists working at home and abroad today, but will also be useful to future members of the profession as they strive to develop and implement ever more efficient and effective teaching methods and language programmes.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN CUBA - AN OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

After Cuba won its independence from Spain in 1898 and came under the sway of direct U.S. political, economic, and cultural influence, English was Cuba's major foreign language and, in some circles, notably among the wealthy, it became virtually a second language. Following the revolutionary victory in 1959, the role of English changed, but it has remained the most important foreign language, and the formal teaching of it has increased considerably over the years.

The author of this thesis became involved in English language teaching in Cuba in the capacity of foreign adviser as the result of an officially-sponsored Canadian government project beginning in early 1972. In order to understand this involvement in the context of a country undergoing a revolutionary process, some background to the history of English language teaching in Cuba before and after 1959 may be useful. In turn, this history should be seen through the perspective of the pervasive influence of the United States in Cuba before the Revolution, and of the general educational development on the island after the Revolution. The sections which follow deal with these aspects.

1.2 English in Pre-revolutionary Cuba

1.2.1 The American Connection

When Fidel Castro returned from a trip to the United States in the first months of the Revolution, he reported to the Cuban people -- in a six-hour speech -- that while in the USA he had spoken English on certain occasions. He said:

"Por cierto, no era shakespeariano, ni muy académico. Hablé en el inglés que sabe todo el mundo aquí -- tal vez un poco menos ... "

("Of course, it wasn't Shakespearian English, or even very academic. I spoke in the English that everyone here knows -- perhaps mine wasn't as good ...") (1)

What the Cuban leader was saying, in effect, was that -- at the triumph of the 1959 Revolution -- great numbers of Cubans had some familiarity with English. As will be shown in this section, this was directly related to the political, economic, and cultural influence of the United States, whose frontiers begin only ninety miles north of the Cuban mainland across the Straits of Florida.

The proximity of the two countries to each other made the United States a natural destination for Cuban emigrés who, beginning in the 1880's, left the harsh rule of the Spanish colony. Large numbers of these Cuban exiles settled in Key West and Tampa, Florida. There they were the producers of esteemed U.S.-made cigars, manufactured, until 1959, with tobacco leaf exported to Florida from the famous Vuelta-Abajo plantations of western Cuba.

The United States was the overseas base for organizing Cuba's thirty-year War for Independence against Spain (1868-1898). The Cuban exiles were the major source for the funds and guns for carrying out the war, and Jose Marti, Cuba's leading intellectual and organizer of the war, lived in the United States for almost two decades. It was there that he founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party in 1892 and it was from American shores that he departed for Cuba where he met death on a battlefield in 1895.

A prolific author, Marti wrote volumes about life, culture, and politics in the United States, but always in the Spanish language, and with a strong sense of Cuban national identity. This showed the powerful Spanish language tradition and national pride in Cuba, which, despite growing U.S. influence on the island, was never in danger of losing its ascendency.

English became a vitally important second language in Cuba following the defeat of Spain in 1898. During the U.S. military occupation of the island between 1898 and 1902, most government business was conducted in the English language and it was notorious that many, if not most, U.S. officers and civilian officials never learned Spanish and expected Cubans with whom they dealt to speak English.

By the time Cuba became an independent republic in 1902, the United States' semi-colonial influence on the island was an accepted fact. Under the Platt Amendment, which paved the way for the withdrawal of the U.S. occupation army, the United States had the right to intervene militarily on the island when it deemed its interests to be endangered. It also retained a large piece of Cuban territory on the eastern portion of the island. This became the Guantánamo Naval Base, and contrary to the wishes of the people and the present Cuban government, continues to exist today.

Furthermore, with independence, United States-owned business interests began to invest heavily in Cuba. The most important investments were in sugar-cane production and in the crude-sugar-producing industries. The United Fruit Company and other U.S. enterprises ran huge sugar plantations and mills where American personnel held the most important managerial and technical positions. Entire towns around the mills, such as Banes and Preston in Oriente, Cuba's easternmost province, had schools where subjects were taught by American teachers in English. These centres became, in fact, U.S. enclaves on Cuban soil.

The island became a fertile field for other kinds of U.S. investments. In the capital city of Havana, urban

transport and electric power were provided by American-owned companies. Western Union, Postal Telegraph, and later, the Cuban Telephone Company were also all U.S.-owned.

Eighty-five percent of Cuban imports came from the United States and approximately the same percentage of its exports were sent to its northern neighbour in U.S.-owned ships. Cuban finances were dominated by the National City Bank of New York, the Chase Manhattan Bank, the First Bank of Boston and other U.S. banks. Financial advisers to the Cuban government were invariably American.

The American influence was deeply felt in virtually all other spheres of life. Cuba used, almost exclusively, U.S.-made cars, machinery and consumer products, from Coca Cola to Kleenex to Kellogg's Corn Flakes. From the beginning of the introduction of the cinema, Cuban cities, like their counterparts in the United States, featured Hollywood-made films. In sports, Cuban boxers and baseball players sought fame and fortune in the United States, and Cuban sports fans were avid followers of the U.S. Major League baseball teams.

When television was in its early stages, a special parabolic antenna was built near Havana to pick up direct broadcasts of U.S. programmes, such as U.S. movies and

the Friday night boxing matches sponsored by Gillette Razors.

Following World War II, Havana soon became the major Caribbean tourist attraction for Americans. U.S.-based organized crime had ambitious plans for turning Havana into one of the world's most important gambling centres, and in the 1950's, several major hotels with gambling casinos were built in the Vedado district of Havana. The last to be opened shortly before the victory of the Cuban Revolution was the Hotel Riviera where gambling was controlled by the notorious mafia financial wizard, Meyer Lansky.

The close ties between Cuba and the United States made the English language a virtual necessity for most businessmen and professionals. On the upper social levels, a mastery of English was both important and prestigious. In addition, hundreds of thousands of Cubans on lower levels of the social order who came into contact with Americans or U.S. culture in one form or another also became familiar with elements of the language.

Most Cubans believed in a kind of geographic fatalism which posited that Cuba would always be dependent on the United States. Leonardo Sorzano Jorrin, Cuba's leading linguist and English pedagogue for the first half of this

century wrote:

> "It is a law of life for Cuba to maintain cordial relations of real friendship with that enormous nation (the United States), because of its proximity ... and (our) consequent economic dependence on it; also for historical reasons." (2)

Nonetheless, Sorzano Jorrin seemed anxious that this economic dependence on the United States not translate itself into the destruction of Cuba's sense of national and cultural identity. He viewed a knowledge of English by Cubans, not in terms of cultural absorption, but rather as a weapon for the defense of the island's national values. "The best defense of our nationality," he wrote, "is to understand our neighbours profoundly, and in order to know them in that way, we must begin by knowing their language." (3)

1.2.2 English Language Teaching in Cuba: pre-1959

Prior to the revolutionary victory in January 1959, English was taught at the state-run secondary schools, at private bilingual schools, at language academies and at Special Centres of English.

English was not taught at the state-run elementary schools or, in any comprehensive way, at any of the autonomous but state-financed universities in Havana, Santa Clara and Santiago de Cuba. However, it was taught in private colleges such as the Catholic-run University of Villanueva in Havana.

In pre-revolutionary Cuba, the percentage of the population receiving the benefits of organized English courses was relatively small.

English was taught from Grade 7 to Grade 12, but really began in earnest at the high school level (Grades 9 - 12), where it was taught in the first three years of the four- or five-year bachillerato. (4)

By 1959, there were only 21 state-run high schools, with a total enrolment of approximately 63,000 in the 1958-59 academic year. (5) However, only a small fraction of Cuba's adolescent population ever reached the high school level.

English was also taught at the 19 normal schools, where some 9000 students were enrolled in the 1958-59 academic year.

The only university undergraduate English courses were those given to engineers and architects in the first semester of their first-year studies. According to Dr. Rosa Antich, a recognized Cuban authority on English language teaching (6), this was due almost entirely to the initiative of Francisco Gastón, an engineer himself, who decided that engineering and architectural students needed English classes to help them understand their textbooks, which, almost without exception, were written by American authors in English.

Gastón compiled and published a textbook, **Short Lessons on Engineering and Architecture.** (7) This book, first

published in 1934, underwent four editions and was used at all three Cuban state universities in the 1950's. It contained well over 50 reading passages in English covering the full range of topics that an engineering student would have to study in his five-year undergraduate course. Detailed word lists, but no exercises, accompanied the text. According to Antonio Ronda, a civil engineer who studied engineering in Santiago de Cuba in the 1950's, this book was invaluable for giving the students the essential vocabulary needed for reading in the various subjects of engineering. He stressed, however, that the course did nothing to prepare him for speaking English. (8)

Many wealthy middle class families of Cuba sent their children to one of Havana's private schools which were often bilingual. Furthermore, many of these families employed American or British governesses for their young children, so by the time they enrolled in the bilingual schools, they already had a knowledge of English. On the other hand, some wealthy families sent their children to private schools in the United States and Canada.

In some cases, families of lesser means made the necessary sacrifices to send their children to private schools because of the social and professional advantage which such an education would give them. In addition,

the state-run schools were notorious for their insufficient resources, including the lack of textbooks, and frequently unqualified teachers, many of whom were political appointees. (9) According to many Cubans, corruption in the educational system was rife and part of the money appropriated by the government for schools found its way into private pockets.

On the other hand, private bilingual schools, such as Candler College run by the American Methodist Church, and the American Dominicans run by American nuns, succeeded in graduating students who could handle English and Spanish with equal facility. (10)

This bilingualism was achieved by teaching in both English and Spanish from Grade 1 onwards up through high school. Usually the morning was devoted to teaching in English, and the afternoon to teaching in Spanish. Many of the subjects were taught in both languages (e.g. Maths), although certain subjects were given in one language only (e.g. History, taught only in Spanish). In almost all these schools, American textbooks were used, not only for the teaching of the English language itself, but for other subjects as well, such as Geography.

The greatest number of bilingual schools were in the capital city of Havana, where the wealth of the country was concentrated. However, other major cities, such as

Matanzas, Cienfuegos, and Santiago de Cuba usually had at least one.

English language schools were also established in areas where U.S. influence predominated. One such school existed for the children of Americans who bought land on the Isle of Pines in the 1920's to grow citrus fruits and other crops. Another bilingual school was run by American Quakers in the town of Banes in the eastern province of Oriente where the Boston-based United Fruit Company owned a sugar mill and sugar-cane plantations.

The presence of the U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo in south-eastern Cuba exerted considerable linguistic influence on nearby Cuban towns. Moreover, this region had a large number of sugar-plantation workers who had migrated to Cuba in the 1920's from Jamaica and other English-speaking countries of the Carribbean. These families spoke English at home, and even today third and fourth generation descendents, whose first language is now Spanish, speak some English. (11)

Prior to the Revolution, numerous state-run Special English Centres could be found in every major city of Cuba and in the different districts of the capital, Havana. They were attended by persons who could not afford the fees at private academies or at bilingual schools. The centres enrolled any Cuban over the age of

twelve regardless of academic level. The standard course was given one hour a day, starting in the late afternoon after normal working hours, five times a week. (12)

The Special English Centres might be considered the precursors of the language schools which are part of the system of adult education in post-revolutionary Cuba. Today's language schools, however, offer as many as ten different languages (of which English is by far the most important) whereas their precursors offered only English.

The Instituto Cultural Cubano-Norteamericano, founded in the 1940's and financed by the American government and U.S. businesses operating in Cuba, was one of the major centres for adult English studies. Its Abraham Lincoln Language School in Havana and Centro Norteamericano in Santiago de Cuba used textbooks from the United States which favoured a structural method. Although the Lincoln School also offered French and German courses, virtually all of its students were enrolled in the English programme. (13)

Because of the great incentive to learn English for professional needs and job advancement, many private English language schools for adults flourished in Havana and other large Cuban cities. Among them were many small schools run by one or two people who also offered special tutorial services and private lessons. (14)

One of the most successful professional schools was the Havana Business Academy where Cubans received a thorough knowledge of the English language linked to office and business practice. The Havana Business Academy, and others which followed the same pattern, taught English and Spanish, Stenography, Typing, and Bookkeeping. Graduates found employment in Cuban subsidiaries of North American businesses where bilingual skills were necessary, such as Swifts-Armour, Coca Cola, Pan American Airways, the Royal Bank of Canada, etc.

In the pre-revolutionary period in Cuba, the requisite for being an English teacher was a knowledge of English rather than any formal academic training. In the expensive and exclusive bilingual schools and private academies, the teachers were usually native speakers (for example, wives of American businessmen living in Cuba) or Cubans who had studied in the United States or in Cuban bilingual schools, and who therefore spoke English with native-speaker fluency. Few, however, had training as teachers.

Graduates from the Special English Centres also aspired to become English teachers, although in general, many found it difficult to find employment because of their more limited knowledge of English and/or their weaker political connections. According to the best evidence

available, large numbers of teachers in state schools were directly appointed by the Minister of Education whose criteria were notoriously political and personal.

1.2.2.1 **Leonardo Sorzano Jorrin**

Upon Sorzano's death in 1950, Daniel Jones, the British linguist wrote to Sorzano's daughter that he had, over long years of association with her father, "learnt to respect him greatly and to admire his work." (15)

During the first half of the 20th century, virtually all of the standard English textbooks used in the state-run schools were the work of the Cuban linguist and pedagogue, Leonardo Sorzano Jorrin, who, in the opinion of Dr. Rosa Antich, was the first person in Cuba to put English language teaching on a scientific footing. (16)

The son of wealthy Cubans who had fled from Cuba in the 1870's to escape the Cuban War for Independence against Spain, Sorzano Jorrin was born in France and educated in the United States. However, in the words of his daughter, Sorzano Jorrin "always felt Cuban and nothing else." (17)

In 1899, a year after Cuba had gained its independence from Spain and the year he graduated from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., Sorzano Jorrin accompanied his maternal grandparents on their return to Havana. He immediately began to teach English at the only

secondary school in existence in the capital at that time, the Instituto de Segunda Enseñanza de la Habana, where he remained a teacher until his death in 1950 at the age of 72.

During his 51-year teaching career, he introduced new classroom methods using a more scientific approach to the study of language, helping to put an end to the traditional and limited grammar-translation method used in Cuba and most of the world in the 19th century. He was responsible for introducing into Cuba the practice of providing written materials for the guidance of English teachers and of offering courses for the improvement of their linguistic knowledge and methodological skills.

From the beginning, Sorzano Jorrin was highly influenced by the Reform Movement in language teaching which spread across Europe at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. This movement rejected the old method of mechanically translating sentences and memorizing lists of words by emphasizing the study of phonetics and oral practice. It also broke with the past by discarding the use of unrelated sentences and classical English texts, replacing them with connected texts of normally-spoken language. The Reform Movement was the result of co-operation between progressive-minded phoneticians and language teachers to address the problem

of how to teach language in a more motivating and efficacious way.

Sorzano Jorrin was familiar with the work of such leading founders of the Reform Movement as Vietor, Passy, and Henry Sweet.

In 1906, Sorzano Jorrin joined the International Phonetic Association (IPA), which had been founded in 1886 and was the most notable society to grow out of the Reform Movement. In his letter to the London-based association, requesting membership, Sorzano stated, "I have been teaching English in the Institute of Havana for the past seven years, more or less according to the principles that you advocate." (18) Months before joining the IPA, Sorzano Jorrin had subscribed to its journal, **Le Maitre Phonètique.**

Sorzano was also influenced by the work of Daniel Jones, and even more so by that of Jones' associate at the University of London, the English teacher and applied linguist, Harold Palmer. All of Palmer's books, including those written during his fifteen years of experimental teaching in Japan, were among the 4000 volumes of Sorzano's extensive private library.

In addition to being an English teacher, Sorzano Jorrin was a pioneer in the field of Phonetics in Cuba. One of

his main influences was Daniel Jones, whose **English Pronouncing Dictionary** (1917), serves even today as a source book for English language teachers. Among the 36 English language textbooks which Sorzano himself wrote were **Fonètica Elemental, Lecciones en Inglès de Ortografia Fonètica,** and **Lecciones de Pronunciación del Inglès para Maestros** which included phonetic charts.

Sorzano's work in Cuba won international recognition and in 1936, upon the death of one of the great founders of the Reform Movement, William Tilly, he was elected to the executive board of the IPA. And when Sorzano died in 1950, Daniel Jones, in his letter of condolence to Sorzano's daughter, not only spoke of the respect and admiration he felt for her father's work, but also commented: "... his loss will be much felt in the phonetic world." (19)

For more than forty years, Sorzano Jorrin supplied Cuban education with numerous textbooks which put into practice the ideas of the Reform Movement and the IPA. He produced two series of English language textbooks. The earliest series began in 1910 with the publication of **Libro Primero de Inglès.** By 1940 this series included first, second, third and fourth level textbooks and readers, accompanied by an elementary English grammar book (**Gramàtica Elemental Inglesa**), student workbooks, teacher's guides and wall charts. A second series, **El**

Inglès en Acciòn was published between 1937 and 1942 and consisted of first and second year readers, student workbooks, study guides for the teachers and phonetic wall charts.

One might sum up the principles which were advocated by the IPA and which Sorzano incorporated into his work as follows:

:spoken everyday language should take precedence over literary language.

:the early stages of a language course should be devoted to the teaching of the sounds of a language.

:coherent dialogues or prose narratives should be used as the main vehicle for teaching the most common sentences and idiomatic phrases.

:there should be a two-stage approach in the teaching of grammar. In the early stages inductive, observation techniques should be used and in the second stage a systematic study for advanced learners.

:the so-called "direct method", or monolingual method, should be used in which the language being taught should be used exclusively in the classroom.

Sorzano early recognized the need for teaching specialized English. As the director of the Instituto de

Idiomas Modernos, during its two years of existence from 1928 to 1930, he introduced specialized English for law and medical students. In 1933 he published his **El Inglès Comercial y La Forma de Las Cartas Comerciales.**

During his long career, Jorrin was concerned about the professional development of teachers as well as teaching methods and materials. In 1906, he introduced -- for the first time in Cuba -- teaching notes and guides for the teachers. Each year he sent his English language syllabuses and accompanying explanations to English teachers in secondary schools throughout the country with the aim of improving the quality of teaching methodology.

One of his pioneering achievements was the organization of a short course for English teachers in 1921 in which he taught Methodology and Phonetics. During the course, the teachers were also expected to give classes, which he evaluated. Lessons prepared by Professor Sorzano were mimeographed and distributed to the teachers. It is believed that this was the first time the mimeograph machine was used for such a purpose in Cuba. (20)

In 1937, Sorzano published what many consider to be his most important work, the **Manual del Maestro de Inglès,** which summed up his decades of experience as a teacher.

In the 1930's, he fought unsuccessfully for the

establishment of a permanent Instituto de Maestros de Idiomas Modernos under the jurisdiction of the Schools of Philosophy and Education at the University of Havana.

In 1940, when a new and more democratic Cuban constitution was passed which many hoped would lead to a new era of honest administration and social change, Sorzano Jorrin wrote an article in the newspaper, **Alerta**, concerning the shortcomings in language teaching and education in general. In the article, he expressed his concerns as well as his hopes about what the new changes might mean to the teaching of English. He specifically addressed the question of teacher training. "It is not that we do not have good English teachers," he wrote, "nor that those who teach English do not know the language. The problem is that not all those who speak the language of Shakespeare can teach it because they do not have training in English teaching methodology." (21)

The following year, 1941, the Escuela de Verano of the University of Havana was founded. It offered a systematic programme of summer courses to be taken over a four-year period. The English section, under the directorship of Sorzano Jorrin, concentrated on methodology, and these courses were given by Sorzano himself. The courses in Literature, Grammar, and Phonetics were always given by professors who came either from the United States or Britain. All the classes were

conducted in English and the students were required to pass an entrance exam in this language before beginning the programme. Upon successful completion of the programme, the students, for the most part practising teachers, were awarded certificates. These certificates were recognized as equivalent to a university degree by a ministerial decree in the 1950's.

It was also in the 1940's that Sorzano established an exchange scholarship programme under which Cuban English teachers studied in the United States and American Spanish teachers studied in Cuba. (22)

In 1946, Sorzano Jorrin spearheaded the founding of the Colegio Nacional de Profesores de Inglés. The Colegio sponsored lectures and courses aimed at improving and updating the linguistic and pedagogic skills of teachers. The Colegio also took over the responsibility of publishing **The Teacher**, a magazine which had previously been founded by Sorzano and which printed articles on methodology and other matters of interest to English teachers.

Sorzano Jorrin introduced into Cuba systems that took advantage of the most up-to-date technology by giving English courses over the radio and by producing phonograph recordings. In 1937 a series of ten-inch records was made that demomstrated how to pronounce

English sounds and which carried several English language lessons. These were sold commercially and could be found in libraries.

In the 1940's, towards the end of his life, Sorzano became enthusiastic about the idea of producing classroom films that would constitute complete English-course packages. (23)

Throughout his life, Sorzano Jorrin opposed unethical practices which were prevalent in the Cuban educational system. He never reconciled himself to the fact that many teachers passed students in their courses under the pressure of written or verbal appeals by influential people. In order to minimize these unethical practices in the field of English language teaching, he developed -- again, for the first time in Cuba -- a system of objective testing for the evaluation of English students. His system incorporated his teaching ideas, assigning 50% of a 100% marking scheme to oral work and the other 50% to written work.

The work of Profesor Jorrin over half a century laid the basis for an efficacious and scientific approach to language teaching in Cuba, and many of the ideas and principles which he fought for and introduced still have validity today.

1.2.2.2 University of Michigan Link: Audiolingualism

Cuba was probably one of the first Third World nations to introduce the audiolingual method, which grew out of the structural approach perfected by Fries at the University of Michigan. This was not fortuitous as an annex of the English Language Institute of the University of Michigan, the Instituto de Idiomas Extranjeros Juan Manuel Dihigo, was established in Havana in 1950.

The English programme followed the Michigan Intensive Course for Latin American Students and concentrated on courses in Pronunciation, Vocabulary Practice, Pattern Practice, Theoretical Phonetics, Composition, and Practice Teaching. Most of the students had studied and/or taught at the Special Centres of English, although some were graduates of private bilingual schools.

It is interesting to note that the audiolingual method came to Cuba in the same year that Sorzano Jorrin died. Jorrin had pioneered the implementation in Cuba of the direct method and had maintained an intimate relationship with the British School of Linguistics. One could speculate that if Jorrin had continued to live and work, he might have followed the British example of continuing the use of the connected text, an all important element absent in the audiolingual method, and which, of course, is the object of study in Discourse Analysis, one of the

new branches of Linguistics which led to the communicative approach to language teaching.

It was logical that during the 1950's the audiolingual method and the Lado-Fries series of textbooks should take hold in Cuba. For the first time, a full-time four-year course for those wishing to be certified teachers of English or French was offered by the Instituto de Idiomas Extranjeros Juan Manuel Dihigo (an annex of the University of Michigan's English Language Institute), thus opening up greater possibilities for those entering the profession.

In the 1950's, graduates of the Juan Manuel Dihigo Institute, like those of the Escuela de Verano, were granted university-level degrees according to the same ministerial decree. This recognition by the government in the 1950's was the first step taken towards the development of university-level courses and professional training programmes for English language teachers in Cuba.

It was not, however, until the victory of the Revolution in 1959 that a large-scale training programme in English language teaching involving hundreds of persons was undertaken. Furthermore, this endeavour was extended to all of Cuba's six provinces and not just to the nation's capital of Havana.

1.3 English in Post-revolutionary Cuba

1.3.1 General Educational Growth

From the very beginning, the new revolutionary government put extraordinary emphasis on education. This meant an almost immediate increase in school enrolment with its concomitant need for a great many more classrooms, textbooks, and teachers than were already available.

In preparation for this big leap forward, the government promulgated Law 76 of February 13, 1959, which decentralized the administrative apparatus of Cuban education. (24)

Before the Revolution, all appointments of school personnel, from teachers to custodians, had to be approved by the Ministry of Education in Havana. Even the transfer of a teacher from one school to another in the same locality had to go through Havana. The new law gave authority to the provincial and municipal educational authorities to control local personnel. Under the law, however, centralization was assured by leaving technical-pedagogical matters, such as syllabuses for schools and in-service teacher-training courses, in the hands of the Ministry of Education in Havana.

The second step taken by the new government was to

increase the number of elementary-school classrooms by some 50%. Prior to the Revolution, there were over 17,000 state elementary school classrooms (aulas) and 3200 private elementary school classrooms. (25) Law 561 of September 1959 laid the basis for the creation of 10,000 new elementary classrooms, most of them in the small towns and rural areas which had been neglected until then. (26)

The nationalization of private schools was one of the next steps. On June 6, 1961, the more than 2000 private schools in Cuba with almost a quarter of a million students at all levels ceased to exist. (27)

The nationalization law declared:

> "Education should be given free of charge to guarantee the right of all citizens to an education without discrimination and privileges." (28)

1.3.1.1 **The Literacy Campaign**

The year 1961 was named **Year of Education** and was witness to one of the most massive literacy campaigns in the history of world education. What is most remarkable is that this campaign was carried out in the midst of an armed battle for survival of the Revolution which included the frustrated U.S.-sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion in April of that year.

The Literacy Campaign was part of a much larger process to broaden the country's educational system which, until then, had favoured only a small elite. Its scope illustrates the scale of demand and need for educational programmes and indicates why it was necessary, particularly in the early stages of the Revolution, to send many students abroad for specialized training and to bring foreign experts to the island to advise and teach. Among the latter were the Canadian English language specialists who arrived in Cuba in 1972.

The 1953 Cuban census showed that 545,000 children between six and fourteen years of age, 44.4% of the children in that age group, did not go to school. It also showed that 385,394 children from rural areas did not have any schools in their areas. Moreover, those farm children who did attend one-room schools, usually dropped out after only one or two years of schooling.

The accumulative effects of educational deprivation over these years also showed up in the census which disclosed 1,032,849 illiterate Cuban adolescents and adults on the island.

At a speech before the United Nations on September 26, 1960, Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro announced to the world:

"In the coming year, our people intend to fight the

> great battle against illiteracy, with the ambitious goal of teaching every single inhabitant of the country to read and write in one year, and with that end in mind, organizations of teachers, students and workers, that is, the entire people, are preparing themselves for an intensive campaign..." (29)

During 1961, a veritable army was thrown into the "National Campaign of Alphabetization", as the literacy campaign was called. Three major tasks faced the campaign: find the illiterates; recruit and prepare volunteer teachers; organize classes in the entire country, including the remote and isolated rural areas.

The search for the illiterates was not easy. Commissions were set up in each of Cuba's six provinces to do the job. By the end of February 1961, 412,000 illiterates had been discovered and this figure rose slowly until, by August 30, 985,329 illiterates with possibilities of learning to read and write had been found.

Professional teachers, students, workers, housewives and retired people became volunteer teachers. Schools were shut down and the young volunteer teachers of the Conrado Benitez Brigade (30) were sent to Varadero, a beach resort to the east of Havana, at the rate of 10,000 a week to take quick courses, and collect their uniforms, equipment and books, before going off into the rural areas.

The typical uniform was a khaki beret, khaki pants, boots

and a blue cambray shirt. An insignia attached to a shoulder strap announced that he or she was a member of the Conrado Benitez Brigade. Each volunteer, some as young as thirteen and fourteen years old, was given a tin cup, a Coleman-type lantern made in China (there was no electricity in most rural areas), pencils, notebooks and copies of a small textbook called **Venceremos** (We Shall Overcome).

The "alphabetization campaign" was organized by a National Literacy Commission which had four sections: technical, publicity, finances, and publications.

The major task of the commission was to organize and implement the campaign, which, although a big job for a country most of whose administrators and professionals had left by 1961, was not as overwhelming a task as that faced by certain other countries. Cuba is a narrow island, some 800 miles long, and physical distances do not present the problem found in a country the size of the Soviet Union, Ethiopia or even Nicaragua.

Cuba was further spared the difficult problem of choosing a national language -- something many Third World nations emerging from a colonial state have had to confront.

Colonized by the Spaniards in the early 16th century, only a few decades after Columbus landed on its shores in 1492, Spanish has been the national language for

centuries. Virtually all the original Indian inhabitants had died off by the 17th century due to the harsh conditions of life and work imposed by the colonizers, and the African slaves who replaced them as the labour force did not make a linguistic impression on the country, even though by the 1800's there were more blacks than whites on the island. There is a pronounced Afro-Cuban culture, but Cuba is a linguistically-homogeneous nation with a world language as its mother tongue.

The National Literacy Commission, therefore, was not faced with the question of what language to teach, but rather with what method to use. The technical section, made up of experienced teachers, decided on the traditional phonetic system.

The lessons in the textbook, **Venceremos**, had a political thrust. For instance, the first lesson taught the vowels O E A (Organización de Estados Americanos - Organization of American States), which was very much in the news at the time because it had only recently expelled Cuba from its ranks. The second lesson taught the letters I N R A which were the initials for Cuba's land reform institute (Instituto Nacional de Reforma Agraria) known to every farmer.

Among the chapter headings were "The Cooperative", "The Land", "Cuban Fishermen", and "Cuba is Not Alone".

By August 30, some 270,000 Cubans were teaching the illiterates to read and write. Their ranks included approximately 100,000 students, 35,000 teachers, 15,000 workers and 120,000 housewives and old-age pensioners.

The literacy workers were sent into communities where there were families with illiterate members. In the rural communities, one "alphabetizer" would be assigned per family, and he or she would live directly with the family. During the day the literacy workers usually worked in some form of production with the workers of the community, and taught the illiterate member or members of the family in the evening.

In the cities, the procedure was a little different where the literacy workers did not necessarily live with the families who had illiterate members.

By the end of 1961, a little over 700,000 Cubans had successfully passed literacy tests, leaving a 3.9% illiteracy rate on the island. A UNESCO report later said, "The campaign was not a miracle, but rather a difficult conquest obtained through work, technique, and organization." (31)

In order to consolidate and extend the achievements of the Literacy Campaign, continuing adult education courses were organized (cursos de seguimiento). This, in turn,

gave rise to an extensive "worker-farmer" educational programme within which the Cuban trade union movement (the CTC) played a decisive role.

Twenty years after the original literacy campaign, Cuba could boast that 1.4 million workers, farmers, and housewives had successfully completed sixth grade within the system of worker-farmer education. (32) At the same time, over 213,000 adults were enrolled in the last year of junior high school (Grade 9) (33), while almost 64,000 were enrolled in the Facultad Obrera Campesina (the Worker-Farmer Faculty) at the senior high school level (Grades 10 to 12).

1.3.1.2 Increases in Educational Enrolment

NOTE: A statistical reference table (A) comparing the number of Cuban schools, teachers and students during the years 1958-59, 1972-73, and 1981-82, is found on the next page.

CUBAN STATE SCHOOLS, TEACHING STAFF & ENROLMENT

	No. of Schools			No. of Teachers			No. of Students		
	1958-59	1972-73	1981-82	1958-59	1972-73	1981-82	1958-59	1972-73	1981-82
PRIMARY LEVEL	7,567	15,474	11,771	17,355	68,699	72,000	702,198[1]	1,852,714	1,409,765
MEDIUM LEVEL									
(Junior High Schools)	[6][3]	459	1,115	1,400[2]	15,434	50,200	26,278[2]	200,448	654,800
(Senior High Schools)	21[3]	39	238	1,180	1,300	12,600	37,248	22,033	171,637
(Tech. & Prof. Schools)	40	93	426	1,277	4,652	19,500	15,698	41,940	263,981
(Normal Schools)	19	354	166	692	2,511	6,800	8,899	59,980	92,200
UNIVERSITY LEVEL									
(universities, etc.)	3[4]	4	32	1,053	4,697	12,100	25,599	48,735	165,500
ADULT EDUCATION	[6]	835	1,339	[6]	30,861	23,000	34,531[5]	398,003	342,800
SCHOOLS FOR HANDICAPPED	[7]	127	282	[7]	1,560	3,814	[7]	8,878	28,568
OTHERS	26			691			3,742		
TOTAL:									3,129,251

Unless otherwise stated, the statistics are taken from the following sources:
- 1958-59: **Boletin Estadistico 1971**, Junta Central de Plantificacion (La Habana 1972), pp. 266-279.
- 1972-73: **Anuario Estadistico de Cuba 1979**, Comite Estatal de Estadisticas (La Habana 1980)
- 1981-82: **Cuba en Cifras 1982**, Comite Estatal de Estadisticas (La Habana 1983)

[1] This figure includes the students in private elementary schools, who numbered approximately 120,000. Figure cited in an article, **La Revolucion y los Problemas de la Revolucion**, by Armando Hart, in **Cuba Socialista**, Dec. 1961, p.33

[2] These figures represent grades 7 & 8 (senior public school) and are taken from **Boletin Estadistico 1967**, op. cit. p.144

[3] In 1958-59, there were 2,139 big and small private schools in Cuba, among them 145 high schools.

[4] In addition to the three state universities, there was the Catholic University of St. Thomas of Villanueva, founded in 1946, with an enrolment in 1958 of less than 1000 students. Plans for a Masonic University were interrupted by the Revolution.

[5] See Armando Hart in **Cuba Socialista**, Dec. 1961, p.34. This figure is given for the academic year 1959-60 and represents the enrolment in the old night schools, which were incorporated into the Adult Education system in 1961.

[6] No statistics available.

[7] Did not exist in 1958.

1.3.1.2.1 **Primary School**

In the regular school system, expansion of the educational programme meant an immediate increase in primary school enrolment, from Grades 1 through 6. In the first full academic year of the post-revolutionary period, 1959-60, enrolment jumped from approximately 700,000 to a over one million, an increase of close to 45%.

Due largely to a baby boom in the first years of the Revolution, (34) primary school enrolment rose steadily over the next decade and a half, reaching a peak of over 1,795,000 in the 1975-76 academic year, and then declining gradually by half a million to close to one and a half million in the 1981-82 academic year and to a little over one million in the 1985-86 school year. (35)

1.3.1.2.2 **Secondary School**

The educational revolution in Cuba brought about a restructuring of secondary education following the example of the United States with separate junior high schools (Grades 7 to 9) and senior high schools (Grades 10 to 12). In Cuba, these two levels are called "secundaria basica" (basic secondary) and "pre-universitario" (pre-university).

Prior to the Revolution, Grades 7 and 8 had existed as

extensions of primary education, within the same elementary schools, leading to a vocational or normal school education. Most students aspiring to a high school education never entered Grade 7 but rather, upon completion of Grade 6, took an examination to enter the "bachillerato" (high school) directly, or did a special one-year high school entrance course (año de ingreso), followed by an exam. In either case, Grades 7 and 8 were superfluous for them.

For this reason, in addition to the high dropout rate in Cuban primary schools, the 7th and 8th grades had traditionally had a relatively small enrolment. In the pre-revolutionary 1958-59 year, enrolment in "senior primary" (7th and 8th grades) stood at less than 27,000, compared with almost 700,000 at the primary level, that is, less than four per cent.

By the 1960-61 academic year, 315 government-run junior high schools had been established throughout the island with a total enrolment of some 90,000 students. By the 1971-72 school year, with the consequences of the early 1960's baby boom hitting the junior high school levels, this figure had reached 200,000. (36)

Junior high school enrolment rose to 380,000 in 1975-76, over 480,000 in 1976-77, and reached a peak of over 690,000 in 1979-80. Throughout the 1980's it has

remained over 600,000. In other words, a 750% increase had taken place over the twenty-year period between 1960 and 1980. (37)

Enrolment at the senior high school level (Grades 10 thorugh 12) also manifested a delayed reaction to the early 1960's baby boom and the expansion of educational opportunity. In the 1958-59 academic year, 21 state-run high schools had an enrolment of somewhat more than 37,000, while enrolment in private schools on this level is estimated to have been no more than 15,000. (38)

In the first post-revolutionary years, senior high school enrolment slipped to a low of about 15,000 in 1962-63 (39) as students opted for technical and professional high schools, or went to work in the expanded labour market. However, a veritable explosion in senior high school enrolment began in the mid-1970's, rising to over 100,000 in 1978-79 and reaching more than 170,000 during the academic years 1980 through 1985. (40)

Junior and senior high school level technical and professional schools for medium-level industrial, agricultural and administrative education also mushroomed in the mid-1970's. In 1958-59, the technical and professional schools run by the government had an enrolment of a mere 15,700 students. (41) In 1969, a decade later, the enrolment was somewhat less than

double that of the pre-revolutionary figure, but by 1975-76 it had risen above 100,000; by the 1981-82 school year it had reached just under 264,000; by the 1983-84 academic year it had surpassed 300,000. (42)

1.3.1.2.3 **Higher Education**

Higher education has also blossomed dramatically as Cuba has sought to lay a cultural and technical foundation for pulling itself out of underdevelopment. By the 1984-85 academic year, university enrolment had reached 200,000. This compared with only 25,000 university students during the 1958-59 school year and even fewer (17,600) in 1961-62. (43)

The total number of universities, university centres (smaller higher educational centres which give university courses to working students) and higher institutes reached 35 in 1984.

Large numbers of working students study in "cursos dirigidos", which combine the attributes of open university courses and correspondence courses.

In all, by the 1981-82 academic year, over 3,100,000 Cubans, or about 1 in 3 inhabitants of the island, were enrolled in formal educational courses. (44)

1.3.1.3 **Budget and Books**

The educational programme of the Cuban government required huge financial outlays. The 1957-58 government appropriation for education was 79.4 million pesos, which at that time was roughly equivalent to the same amount in U.S. dollars. (45) By the 1965-66 fiscal year, the education budget stood at 251 million pesos (46) and in the 1980 budget, educational expenditures accounted for 1.3 thousand million pesos. (47)

Part of the ascending cost of education in Cuba has been a consequence of the ample programme of full-time government scholarships which provide room, board, clothing, books, and other necessities for live-in students. In 1962-63, the number of such scholarship students (becados) stood at 75,000. (48) By the 1967-68 school year, the number had risen to 143,000 (49), and in 1980-81 it reached over 500,000. (50)

The educational expansion brought about the need for the production of textbooks and other written materials. Prior to 1959, Cuba published fewer than a total of one million copies of different books in the island's printing plants. (51)

Soon after the nationalization of the publishing industry in 1960, the printing plants of the nation were given the responsibility of publishing school texts as well as

other books. (52) Book production increased year by year, reaching a total of 50 million copies of 1500 titles in 1981. Of these, 17 million copies of 700 different titles were school texts. (53)

1.3.1.4 **Teacher Training**

Even more necessary than books in themselves were teachers, without whom there could be no general educational progress.

The dilemma which faced Cuban educators from 1959 onwards was, "Should unlimited educational opportunity for children and adults await the training of qualified teachers or should it forge ahead even before certified teachers are available?" The Cubans chose the latter road, and in so doing, were forced to take a largely uncharted path. They informally referred to this as "haciéndolo sobre la marcha", that is, facing and overcoming obstacles while "marching" forward.

The Minister of Education, Armando Hart, expressed this idea in a speech in 1965 when he said "... in our country, the educational plans have been developing and have been developed while the work itself has gone forward." (54)

The most pressing task in the early years was that of

providing teachers for the rapidly expanding school system. Generous estimates made by Cuban educators put the maximum number of trained primary school teachers in 1959 at around 30,000, including over 17,000 teachers in state-run schools (55), over 3500 in private schools (56), and 10,000 trained but unemployed primary teachers (57). Twenty years later, Cuba had over 70,000 licenced primary school teachers. (58)

1.3.1.4.1 Primary School Teacher Training

During the first two academic courses following the Revolution, the number of trained primary school teachers on the island sufficed for the schools in the cities and towns. However, due in part to the reluctance of trained teachers to leave behind urban comforts, ways had to be found to staff numerous new schools in the outlying rural and mountainous districts. (59)

To meet this need for teachers, some very interesting experimental plans were devised and carried out in the 1960's.

In August 1960, Prime Minister Fidel Castro, who took a leading role in determining Cuba's educational policy, proposed that revolutionary-minded youths with complete or incomplete secondary education volunteer to go into the mountains for five years as teachers. The objective,

Fidel said, was that "not one spot in the mountains should remain without a teacher." (60)

The first group of 1400 "volunteer teachers" (maestros voluntarios) began a teacher-training course in March 1960 in the rugged Sierra Maestra Mountains and graduated in August. A second contingent of 1200 graduated in January 1961 after a three-month course. (61) A third contingent of 698 graduated from the new normal school, the Escuela Formadora de Maestros, in San Lorenzo, in the foothills of the Sierra Maestra on November 18, 1961.(62)

Over the next years, it was these "maestros voluntarios" as well as numerous "maestros populares" (people's teachers) who ensured education for hundreds of thousands of Cuban young people in the outlying rural areas, thus giving the authorities time to organize more formal teacher training courses in normal schools and other pedagogical institutes.

In a speech ending the Literacy Campaign in December 1961, Prime Minister Castro made known another innovative plan for training primary school teachers, which included their living under the same difficult rural conditions as those of the majority of their fellow countrymen. It had three phases. (63)

The first-phase "initiation course" of nine months' duration was to be given at Minas Del Frio in the Sierra

Maestra mountains in eastern Cuba. For the second phase, the graduates of Minas del Frio were to move to Topes de Collante atop a peak in the Escambray Mountains in central Cuba for a two-year "first cycle" course that would prepare them to teach Grades 1 to 4.

The third and final phase would move selected graduates of Topes de Collante to the Instituto Pedagógico "Makarenko" in Tarara, about 15 miles east of Havana in the western half of Cuba, for a "second cycle" two-year course that would graduate students as fully qualified teachers for all six primary-school grades.

In September 1962, 1350 students graduated from the "initiation course" at Minas del Frio and were sent to Topes de Collante as first-year students. (64) Another group of students, who had entered Topes de Collante after completing the equivalent of junior high school (Grade 9), moved into the second year at Topes.

In 1963, the first group arrived at the "second cycle" school in Tarara. In 1965, this school graduated 769 qualified primary school teachers. The number of graduates rose to 785 in 1966; 1212 in 1967; 1503 in the 1967-68 course; and 1918 in the 1968-69 course. (65)

Among those who benefitted from innovative educational programmes in the early 1960's were the domestic servants

who had come from urban slums or rural areas before the Revolution to serve the middle and upper classes in Havana. In April 1961, sixty night schools were established in the capital by the Federation of Cuban Women with an enrolment of approximately 20,000 former female servants. (66) In October 1962, many of these students enrolled in a higher-level course which prepared them for work in offices and stores.

The teachers for the former maids were chosen in two groups of 300 each, taken from the ranks of women volunteer teachers, most of whom had an 8th grade education. While acting as teachers, they themselves took a twelve-month course that included Pedagogy, Politics, Maths, and Spanish. (67)

Another source of primary school teachers were young adolescent girls from Cuba's deprived mountainous regions. With parental permission, 1000 girls were sent to Havana in 1961 for a one-year dressmaking (corte y costura) course. The course also included general primary subjects. 13,000 girls were enrolled in the 1962 course; 10,000 in 1963 and again in 1964, by which time dressmaking had become an optional subject. (68)

At the end of an eleven-month course, in December 1963, 300 of these girls were chosen, on the basis of academic level and aptitude, to become teachers at the teacher-

training school in Tarara for the students coming from the first cycle of study in Topes de Collante. (69) While teaching, these 300 were themselves required to attend more advanced teacher training. (70) Meanwhile, hundreds of others from the same courses for farm girls were given the responsibility of looking after and teaching some 10,000 five- to eight-year-olds who were brought to Havana from mountainous rural areas. (71)

In 1968, the task of training primary school teachers was shifted to Cuba's provinces, thus replacing the three-phase Minas del Frio - Topes de Collante - Tarara system, and ending the need for "voluntary" and "people's" teachers. Henceforth, each province has run its own normal schools for its local students, who then teach in the provincial primary schools.

Over subsequent years, thousands of teachers taught primary levels without certificates as qualified teachers. (72) Short courses and constant in-service training finally corrected this situation. By 1981, all primary school teachers in Cuba were qualified with the academic equivalent of a high school education. At the same time, more than 30,000 were enrolled in Cuban universities to study a new speciality called "Bachelor of Primary Education" (Licenciatura de Educación Primaria). (73)

Although the quality of much of the primary-school teaching over a period of more than two decades was questionable, constant up-grading and improvement of the teachers was sought through in-service training and formal courses, and the objective of giving educational opportunity to all of Cuba's children was guaranteed.

1.3.1.4.2 **Secondary School Teacher Training**

The same willingness to experiment which was shown in meeting the challenge of teaching requirements for primary education was equally evident in dealing with the scarcity of teachers for the now compulsory junior high schools. The increased demand for teachers in Grades 7 to 9 obliged the Ministry of Education to hire persons with high school level education but without teacher training.

The immediate solution to the problem of teacher training was the main responsibility of the Higher Institute of Education (ISE - Instituto Superior de Educación), founded in 1961 under the direction of Dr. Max Figueroa, with headquarters in Havana and branches in every major city in Cuba. (74)

ISE set up intensive, centralized local courses and also carried on, year after year, compulsory weekly courses for teachers in all major subjects. (75)

Cuban educators were aware, however, that an enormous problem would be facing them by the early 1970's when the high waves of enrolment in primary school would reach the secondary school level. Therefore, in 1964, institutes for the training of teachers were created at Cuba's three main university centres, with the specific task of meeting the growing need for teaching personnel at the high school level. At the University of Havana, the institute was called "Instituto Pedagógico Enrique José Varona"; at the Central University of Las Villas in Santa Clara, it was called "Instituto Pedagógico Felix Varela"; at the University of Oriente in Santiago de Cuba, it was called "Instituto Pedagógico Frank País". (76)

These "pedagogical institutes", as they were called, had two sections: "básico (basic) and "superior" (higher). The students in the basic section were Grade 9 (junior high school) graduates, and were trained in a five-year course to teach at the junior high school level. Those in the higher section were enrolled from Grade 12, and were destined, after four years of study, to become senior high school teachers. (For a few years, in some specialities, such as English, they were allowed to enter from the 11th grade.)

In the basic section, the students received a general education, a theoretical pedagogic background, practice

teaching experience, and specialization in Science, Social Science, Spanish and a foreign language (for the most part English). In the higher section, the students received some general subjects such as Philosophy and Psychology and a foreign language (again, most studied English), as well as subjects related to the discipline they would teach (e.g. Physics, Maths, English, etc.).

In a speech in March 1965 to the students and staff at the newly-established Pedagogical Institute Enrique José Varona in Havana, ISPEJV, the Minister of Education, Armando Hart, said that teacher training programmes in the past "had greatly underestimated the problem of pedagogy" and that, at the secondary level, school teachers often gave lectures rather than classes based on advanced teaching principles. He defined pedagogy as "technique and common sense linked to the process of teaching". He announced that the students would be sent out to teach in rural primary schools for a semester to ensure that they developed a "practical sense". (77)

The practice of sending these student teachers out to rural primary schools lasted for only a few courses. After that, the students in the basic section of the pedagogical institutes, like students in junior, senior, and technological high schools, spent six to nine weeks a year doing agricultural work in the countryside with the purpose of helping the Cuban economy and of developing a

positive attitude towards manual work.

After the establishment of a separate Ministry of Higher Education (MES - Ministerio de Educacion Superior) in December 1976, the basic section of the pedagogical institutes disappeared. Since then, junior and senior high school teachers alike have been trained in higher pedagogical institutes whose entrance requirement is graduation from Grade 12. These institutes graduate students with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education at the end of a four-year course, the final year of which is devoted largely to Methodology and Practice Teaching.

By 1980, there were 12 higher pedagogical institutes on the island, three of which -- all in Havana -- were specialized: the Instituto Superior Pedagógico de Lenguas Extranjeras (ISPLE) for the training of language teachers; the Instituto Superior Pedagógico de Educacion Técnica y Profesional for prospective teachers in medium-level technological and professional schools; the Instituto Pedagógico de Cultura Fisica for the training of physical health and education teachers. (78)

Even as early as 1970, however, it was evident that the regular programme at the pedagogical institutes would not be able to meet the increased demand for junior high school teachers, especially for the newly-created "schools in the countryside". (79)

These pre-fabricated modern schools each had an enrolment of approximately 500 live-in scholarship students who worked three hours a day in the surrounding fields and studied another five hours a day. (80)

Resorting once more to the "sobre la marcha" way of solving problems, Fidel Castro, in a speech on April 4, 1972, outlined a plan to form a "pedagogical detachment" of students who had completed Grade 10 and wanted to become teachers. (81)

The five-year training for these new student teachers was put under the aegis of the existing pedagogical institutes. The students were first given a short intensive course to prepare them for the classroom. Then they went to live in one of the new schools in the countryside where they gave classes sixteen hours a week in their chosen speciality (Maths, English, etc.). At the same time, they attended classes four hours a day at a nearby municipal branch of the pedagogical institute. These "branch plants" were specially built in the countryside for this new plan.

Each new group of high school students who volunteered for the detachment was called a contingent. Between 1977 and 1981, over 17,000 students of the first five contingents were awarded teaching diplomas. (82)

The 1981 graduating contingent -- whose members had begun their studies in Sept. 1976 -- was the last group to enter the detachment with a Grade 10 qualification. As of the 1977-78 academic year, all teachers were trained at the newly-formed higher pedagogical institutes and entered upon completion of Grade 12. Those students entering directly from high school -- rather than from the Armed Forces, for example -- continue to enter a contingent of the detachment, thus preserving the same concept in a different form.

None of the students in the 1977 to 1981 contingents graduated from the pedagogical institutes with a B.A. degree. However, they all had the opportunity to do a two-year follow-up "amplification plan", and on July 7, 1981, 2,101 students from the 1979 graduating contingent received their B.A. degrees in Education. At that same ceremony in July 1981, 3,662 graduates from the higher pedagogical institutes -- the first group to graduate since the creation of these institutions in December 1976 -- were also awarded Bachelor of Arts degrees.

Thus, at the graduation ceremonies in July 1981, 5,673 students were given Bachelor of Arts degrees and 4,895 were given teaching diplomas with the possibility of obtaining a B.A. in two years' time. This made a grand total of 10,568 new teachers for junior and senior high

schools, something of a record in the history of Cuban education. (83)

During the closing ceremonies, Fidel Castro spoke of the importance of the teacher in the educational process.

> "The heart of the learning process is the work of the teacher; if this is not satisfactory, then the whole process goes wrong." (84)

The Cuban president also emphasized the need for continual upgrading and professional development:

> "The educator should never feel satisfied with his knowledge ... He must continually improve his methods of study, inquiry, and investigation." (85)

Cuba's policy of educational opportunity for all has brought about an increase in the general academic and cultural level of the people. However, Cubans are the first to recognize that because of the constant tensions that have existed between the mass influx of students and the limited experience of professional teachers, quality has not generally reached ideal levels.

Beginning in the early 1980's, with a powerful educational infrastructure already assured, both the Ministry of Education (MINED) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MES) turned their efforts towards improving the quality of teaching and the educational process in general. This would not be an easy process.

Shortly before the 1986-87 school year began, there was public recognition that teaching quality on all levels of education was still far below expectations. Among the major criticisms were that children learned by rote, did not develop proper study habits and did not learn to think scientifically.

English language teaching in post-revolutionary Cuba has enjoyed successes and suffered vicissitudes in keeping with the general educational development. It is with this process in mind that we now turn to the specific situation of English language teaching in post-revolutionary Cuba.

1.3.2 English Language Teaching: 1959 - 1982

"In March 1961, 2 months after the rupture in diplomatic relations with the United States, the Cuban government nationalized the Abraham Lincoln Language School in Havana, which had close ties with the U.S. embassy. One of the first steps was to remove from the patio the statue of Theodore Roosevelt who, in Cuban minds, represented U.S. imperialism.

"Fidel (Castro) ordered that Abraham Lincoln's likeness be substituted for that of 'Teddy' Roosevelt's and that the school continue to be called the Abraham Lincoln Language School. Fidel emphasized that Lincoln's name should remain to show the world that the revolutionary Cuban government is not against the American people, but only against American imperialism."

Quotation from interview on Feb. 10, 1984 in Havana, with Marta Santo Tomás, first director of the nationalized school in 1961.

1.3.2.1 Importance Given to English Teaching

Formal English classes in post-revolutionary Cuba have become available to a very wide sector of the Cuban population in junior and senior high schools, universities, adult language schools and in many government ministeries, on a scale that before did not exist. This is linked to the burgeoning of the island's educational system in general, and has occurred in spite of only limited trade and cultural contacts with English-speaking nations such as Canada, Great Britain and Jamaica, and a total lack of diplomatic relations with the United States since 1961.

Formerly, 85% of Cuba's trade was with the United States. Three years after Fidel Castro's government came to power, the U.S. role in trade with Cuba had been reduced to zero, while the socialist bloc, and most especially the Soviet Union, replaced the United States both as a trading partner and as an ally.

It would be logical to assume that these new relationships would be reflected in the replacement of English language teaching in Cuba by that of the Russian language. This did not, however, take place.

Since the very beginning of the Cuban Revolution, the English language has continued to be, by far, the preferred foreign language in Cuba. Only in 1979 was the

teaching of Russian introduced nationwide into the high school system (starting in Grade 7) as a result of Resolution 185 which established that 30% of the students in Grades 7 to 12 were to study Russian while the other 70% were to continue to take compulsory English courses. (86) By 1985, this goal had been far from met due to the impossibility of training enough Russian teachers, and Russian language teaching in secondary schools -- other than those run by the Cuban Armed Forces -- was greatly reduced. Interestingly, by 1988, most of the Russian teachers were being retrained to be English teachers.

When the Revolution triumphed in January 1959, there was no difference of opinion among Cuban policy-makers as to the importance that English would be given in the new educational programmes. Nor was there ever any question of English being anything other than a foreign language, since Spanish, the established mother tongue of all Cubans, is a world language in its own right. Cuba did not suffer the ambivalence of many former British and French colonies where acceptance of the fact that a lingua franca was vital to their future development accompanied feelings of resentment towards and cultural rejection of the language of the former colonizers.

Many believed that, even though relations were deteriorating between Cuba and the United States, some

day they would improve. Furthermore, even after the rupture of diplomatic relations in January 1961, and the Bay of Pigs invasion in April of the same year, Cubans continued to view English as a primary tool for the transfer of knowledge from the USA and other technologically-advanced countries.

The reason for the choice of English as the single foreign language in the secondary schools also had its practical reasons. English language teaching already had a history in Cuba and sufficient teachers were available to launch an initial large-scale programme of studies, although later, a serious shortage developed as a result of the swelling in numbers of high school students.

Moreover, the English language infrastructure had roots in Cuban society: those from the middle and upper classes who had remained in Cuba were, for the most part, graduates of bilingual schools; professionals were conversant with English; English translators were readily available; and English language texts in most subjects had been used for years since Cubans traditionally viewed the United States as the main fount of information in such fields as medicine, dentistry, and engineering.

Although Fidel Castro and the other Cuban policy-makers were clear about the need for English language teaching, many students rejected English studies, confusing the

language with "imperialism". As a result of this, during the 1960's, at the beginning of each new course, English teachers all over the island, instructed by the Ministry of Education, stressed to their students the importance of English for the country's future. In their remarks, they always reiterated the distinction which Fidel Castro so clearly made between the American people and the policies of a specific U.S. administration, and emphasized that a language had nothing to do with a particular government's foreign policy.

1.3.2.2 Government Control and Expansion of English Teaching

With the nationalization of education in 1961, bilingual English-Spanish schools -- all of which had been private -- disappeared. From that moment on, the Cuban government took over the full responsibility for language training in Cuba.

In 1961, the state-run Special English Centres, which gave evening courses to adults, were discontinued. Their place was taken by numerous language schools, run by the Department of Adult Education of the Ministry of Education. These language schools offered courses in many languages and by the early 1970's were attracting some 25,000 students. (87)

The government also "intervened" in January 1961 and then

nationalized, in March 1961, the U.S. government-supported Instituto Cultural Cubano-Norteamericano and its large Abraham Lincoln Language School in Havana as well as its smaller Centro Norteamericano in Santiago de Cuba. (88)

The government's first concrete move towards strengthening English teaching in Cuba was to increase the total number of hours that English was taught in secondary schools. Prior to the Revolution, English was offered in the first three years of the five-year bachillerato, where the frequency was five hours a week in the first year, three hours a week in the second year, two hours a week in the third year, and no English at all in the fourth and fifth years.

In 1960, the Ministry of Education decreed four hours of English classes weekly from Grades 7 through 12 in all secondary schools throughout the country.

Reading courses in English were also introduced in the first two years of all undergraduate university courses. The decision to concentrate on reading courses grew out of practical considerations. Faced with large classes, the policy-makers decided that while teaching university students to acquire oral fluency was a virtually unattainable goal, reading comprehension was, in the words of Stern (1983:461) "a practical attainable

utility."

This expansion of English language teaching required new syllabuses, textbooks which corresponded to the new programmes, and teacher-training programmes.

These tasks were urgently undertaken at the secondary school level (junior and senior high school). At the university level, however, there was less urgency and the teaching there was less guided and coordinated until the mid-to-late 1970's.

From the beginning, the job of guaranteeing the syllabuses, teaching materials, methodological guidelines, and teacher-training policy for secondary education was centralized at the Ministry of Education in Havana in the English Department, set up within the General Education Section (Direccion de Educacion General). (89)

The point of departure for the secondary school English textbooks was the Lado and Fries **American English Series**, which had first been introduced in Cuba during the 1950's.

The choice of the Lado and Fries audiolingual method was a logical outcome of the influence of the University of Michigan in Cuban English teaching since 1950. In addition, many high-level Cubans in charge of English

language teaching during the first years of the Revolution had been trained at the University of Michigan or at its annex in Havana, the Dihigo Institute.

Nonetheless, once the policy for audiolingual methodology had been laid down in 1961, the English Department at the Ministry began producing books and developing teaching materials whose content was more in keeping with Cuba's post-revolutionary ideology.

In spite of the fact that these teaching materials were almost entirely the responsibility of bilingual Cubans -- educated either in Cuban bilingual schools or abroad in an English-speaking country -- a bilingual methodology was not adopted in the English courses. This was undoubtedly due to the monolingual tradition of English teaching in state schools in Cuba since the beginning of the century: first in the Sorzano Jorrin direct method and then in the Michigan School audiolingual method introduced in 1950.

In many audiolingual programmes the language laboratory was a key element, but this was not the case in Cuba due to the lack of funds required to provide an entire country with the appropriate equipment.

From that time until the present (1988), essentially the same approach has been used in the secondary schools

throughout Cuba. This means that the more than 5000 English teachers working for the Ministry of Education in 1988 (90) had been trained in the use of the structural audiolingual approach.

By the 1970's, the audiovisual approach had been introduced in certain university programmes, in particular for the training of linguists, translators and some language teachers. Language schools of some specialized institutions, such as the Ministry of Foreign Trade (MINCEX) and the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNIC), also began using non-Cuban, commercially-available audio-visual courses such as Alexander's **First Things First, The Turners** and the Filipovic - Webster method. However, lack of financial resources needed for the purchase of tape recorders and film strip projectors prevented the introduction of audiovisual programmes on a large scale.

Due to the fact that a U.S. economic embargo had been clamped down on Cuba in 1960 and that Cuba was not part of an international copyright convention, from the early 1960's, American, British and other textbooks were often "pirated" without permission of overseas publishers and without royalty payments. Thus, there were no limits on "borrowing" parts of books or simply reproducing books that otherwise would have been difficult to import or that were financially beyond Cuba's capabilities. Among

the pirated books were English language textbooks and a large number of medical, engineering, and other specialized texts. (91)

1.3.2.3 English Language Teacher Training

The scope of the new Cuban educational programme resulted in large numbers of teachers entering the profession with heterogeneous academic and teaching backgrounds.

In the case of experienced English teachers, some had studied English language teaching methodology; others had a good command of the language but no theoretical background; still others had bought their English language teaching certificates under corrupt regimes. In addition, new teachers without teaching experience, but with a command of the language, were hired to replace those who had joined the exodus of people from Cuba in the early 1960's. For these reasons, training programmes for English teachers were imperative.

1.3.2.3.1 Higher Institute of Education (ISE)

One of the first needs was to upgrade the language skills and teaching methodology of those who would be giving classes to students in Grades 7 to 12 in the general educational institutions, as well as to students

in the technological and other schools. To this end, an eight-month programme was set up under the aegis of ISE when that institute was organized in 1961.

A close link existed bewteen the English Department in the Ministry of Education and ISE. For eight months in 1961, while the national Literacy Campaign was in progress and schools were closed, many of the island's English teachers were given a five-day a week course to prepare them for the coming academic year. (92)

Courses were given in eleven major cities, covering the six provinces of Cuba, under the general direction of Dr. Rosa Antich, National Inspector of English. This was the first time in Cuba that teachers throughout the country simultaneously received the same course. In the past, all courses and seminars for English teachers had been held only in Havana, which meant that few teachers from cities in the other five provinces had ever had an opportunity for professional up-grading. (93)

The course concentrated on Phonetics (practical and theoretical), Grammar, and Practice Teaching. The textbooks used were Betty Jane Wallace's text on Phonetics, as well as **The Structure of English** and **Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language**, both by Fries. These same texts formed the basis of all English teacher-training programmes throughout the

1960's.

1.3.2.3.2 Máximo Gorki and Pablo Lafargue Institutes

Although the number of English teachers in Cuba sufficed to meet the demand of the first few years, planners foresaw the need for a systematic institutionalized programme to turn out teachers for the latter half of the 1960's when enrolment in the junior high schools was expected to soar.

The first step towards this end was the founding, in early 1962, of the Instituto de Idiomas Máximo Gorki for the training of teachers of English, as well as German, French and Russian. Completion of Grade 9 was the requisite for admission and the course was designed to last four years. The graduates of Gorki were to be assigned to teach Grades 7 to 12 (junior and senior high school), and in the new adult education schools that had replaced the Special Centres of English.

At the same time, concern about the need for translators and interpreters led to the establishment of the Instituto Pablo Lafargue (94) in February 1962. As in the case of Gorki, to enter Lafargue, the students needed only Grade 9, and the course lasted four years.

In 1964, at the time that the pedagogical institutes were set up in the nation's three university centres and

English language teachers were trained there along with other kinds of teachers, Gorki and Lafargue were given a common curriculum in an experimental programme whose objective was to produce teacher-translators in a period of four years. However, within three or four years, it was officially recognized that the graduates of this programme were neither teachers nor translators. According to some professors, most of the students, who entered the programme with only a Grade 9 qualification, had an academic level that made it difficult for them to assimilate advanced material in such a short time to become either top quality teachers or translators once graduated. (95)

The programme was discontinued and Gorki reverted to a centre for the training of teachers for junior high schools, and Lafargue to a centre for preparing translators.

1.3.2.3.3 Faculty of Foreign Languages - University of Havana

In the same year that Gorki and Lafargue were founded (1962), the Faculty of Foreign Languages was created at the University of Havana. At first, these university English courses, which had a limited and highly selective enrolment from among Grade 12 graduates -- about 40 a

year for the whole country -- had no clearly defined objectives other than to give the graduates a "high academic level". There was no commitment to the final profession of the students. (96)

Later, the name of the B.A. course was changed to English Language Studies (Lengua Inglesa) and had two clearly defined majors: one in Linguistics, whose graduates might become linguists, researchers, or specialists in English Literature, and the other in Translation and Interpretation.

Although there have been changes and improvements in the courses over the years, a basic structure has been maintained in the training of the students in the two majors. During the first two years of their five-year course, students in both specialities have Oral Practice in the language. Since the 1970's, this has consisted of twenty hours a week of the Filopovich-Webster audiovisual method in the first year, and twelve hours a week of selected readings with grammar study and practice in the second year. In addition to this, Spanish, Latin, and Greek Grammar, as well as General Linguistics, are studied in the first two years.

As of the third year, the two majors have a separate curriculum. Neither has English Practice as such; rather, the language is practised in use: in listening

to classes given in English; taking notes; writing examinations in English. The subjects included in the three years for the Linguistics major are: Grammar, Phonetics, Linguistics, British and American History.

Although the B.A. course at the University of Havana was not set up to train teachers, in practice, many of the graduates from both majors -- from the earliest stages of its existence to the present (1988) -- have become English teachers, mostly at the university level.

1.3.2.3.4 **Pedagogical Institutes**

The creation of pedagogical institutes at Cuba's three university centres in 1964 helped to supply the necessary English teachers for Grades 7 to 12, as graduates from Grade 6 pushed on up into secondary school. By 1966, however, the demand exceeded the supply and it became necessary to cut back on the programme by eliminating English, first in the seventh grade and then in the eighth grade.

If the pedagogical detachment (See page 55 for a description of this detachment) had not been organized in 1972 to fill the teacher gap, Grade 9 English might have also been eliminated. (97)

With the training of English teachers on the increase, it became possible, in 1972, to re-instate English in both

Grades 7 and 8. A project for introducing English in Grades 5 and 6 of Cuba's primary school system by the beginning of the 1980's, however, proved to be overly optimistic. Books were prepared and were ready for the 1980-81 academic year, but by that time there were still not enough teachers for the whole country, and so the new books were applied in Grades 7 and 8 instead.

In December 1976, when Cuba's greatly expanded educational system was restructured, the new Ministry of Higher Education (MES) was specifically charged with overseeing most of the nation's university-level institutions. The Ministry of Public Health (MINSAP), the Ministry of the Armed Forces (MINFAR), and certain other government ministries ran their own university-level schools with MES establishing teaching objectives and methodological guidelines.

The basic sections of the pedagogical institutes, which had trained junior high school teachers, disappeared. Beginning with the 1977-78 academic year, all junior as well as senior high school level teachers were trained at the newly-created higher pedagogical institutes where the entrance requirement was the completion of high school, i.e. Grade 12. (It will be remembered that the entrance requirement for the basic secions of the pedagogical institutes had only been Grade 9.) Thus, training for

junior high school English teachers was given the potential for qualitative improvement since the entering student had a higher general academic training which included six years of English.

In all of Cuba -- with the exception of Havana -- English teachers were now trained at the provincial higher pedagogical institutes, of which there were nine by 1980. (98) In Havana, the nation's academic capital with a population of two million people (one-fifth of the total Cuban population), a separate and specialized language institute took over the job of language training from the Enrique José Varona Higher Pedagogical Institute, while the latter continued to prepare junior and senior high school teachers in other fields.

The new specialized school, the Higher Pedagogical Institute for Foreign Languages (ISPLE - Instituto Superior Pedagógico de Lenguas Extranjeras), offered a four-year course to day, night, and extension students, leading to a Bachelor in Education degree with a speciality in either Pedagogy or in Translation and Interpretation. (99) With the creation of ISPLE, the older Máximo Gorki and Pablo Lafargue Institutes were abandoned, and ISPLE itself assumed the name "Pablo Lafargue".

1.3.2.4 Higher Level Coordination and Postgraduate Studies

The establishment of MES and specialized institutes such as ISPLE, as well as the stiffer requirements for teacher training, signalled the increasing emphasis laid on the coordination and qualitative improvement in Cuban education, including English language teaching. Thus, in the same year that MES and ISPLE were created (1976), the Ministry of Education (MINED) founded the Central Institute of Pedagogical Sciences (ICCP - Instituto Central de Ciencias Pedagógicas), replacing its predecessor, the Centre for Educational Development (CDE - Centro de Desarrollo Educativo), established four years earlier in 1972.

ICCP brought together in different sub-commissions the people responsible for the curricula in the subjects taught within MINED (e.g. Biology, Physics, Maths, Spanish, English, etc.) in order to unify approaches, objectives, and methods in accordance with an underlying philosophy and ideological principles. The objective was to establish general policy for teacher training and to oversee the writing of syllabuses and textbooks on the primary and secondary levels, in the middle-level technological, agricultural and professional institutes, and within the system of adult education.

The Foreign Languages Sub-Commission of ICCP was headed

by Dr. Rosa Antich, and comprised eighteen "specialists" representing the four major foreign languages taught in Cuba -- English, Russian, French, and German -- as well as minor ones such as Portuguese and Bulgarian. In order to ensure the broadest representation of expertise, the ICCP specialists were chosen not only from MINED itself but from outside institutions such as ISPJAE, the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNIC), and MES.

In 1978, an important first step was taken by the educational authorities to systematize the teaching of English to students other than English-language majors at the university level. The numerical growth of higher learning institutions in the first two decades of the Revolution, and the desire for greater quality in English language teaching brought about the need for a nationally-planned approach to the subject. A national Foreign Languages Commission, with English and Russian sub-commissions, was set up under MES.

The members of the English Sub-Commission came not only from MES itself, but also from such institutions as the University of Havana (the section concerned with non-English Language majors, i.e. students in Biology, Fine Arts, Maths, etc.); ISPJAE; ISPEJV; the Higher Institute of Animal Sciences (ISCA - Instituto Superior de Ciencias Animales), etc.

English teachers from Medicine, the Armed Forces, and certain other government ministries were not represented on the commission. As explained earlier, these institutions did not come under the jurisdiction of MES except for general methodological guidelines.

The first task which the English Sub-Commission assigned itself was that of analyzing the current state of the art through an examination of English language curricula, syllabuses, and textbooks. The aim was to coordinate, with a view to improving, English language teaching at different centres of higher learning. Most had their own syllabuses and textbooks, as well as their own methodologies, resulting in programmes of varying standards and quality.

Coordination was especially important in the new higher educational institutions in Cuba's smaller cities which did not always have experienced English teachers or the same access to bibliography and the exchange of ideas that would guarantee steady improvement in teaching materials and methods.

After a year of study, the English Sub-Commission determined that new textbooks be written for the undergraduate programmes throughout the island. This was felt to be necessary as the investigation had revealed a great disparity between courses being offered.

Furthermore, most of the textbooks being used were out of date in terms of methodology and the content of reading passages.

A single basic textbook was proposed for the first semester of first year, and two textbooks for the second semester: one for the sciences and one for the humanities.

More specialized textbooks for the sciences and humanities were to be produced for the third and fourth semesters (i.e. second year). Thus, separate textbooks were to be written for students of engineering, economics, animal husbandry, agronomy, education, the natural sciences, etc.

As the leading adminstrative centre for the teaching of engineering in the country, ISPJAE was made responsible for the writing of the English textbooks for engineering students for Semesters 3 and 4. More details of this will be given in Chapter Five, which describes a two-year field study carried out at ISPJAE to determine the approach to be used in these new textbooks.

In addition to the work of the National Foreign Languages Commission, an inspection system was organized by MES to ensure that new pedagogical guidelines aimed at more efficiacious classroom practice were being put into use.

These were set down in Resolution 220, decreed by the Ministry of Higher Education in June 1978, and included such methodological principles as the need for an introduction, development, and conclusion to every university class in every discipline. (This is illustrated in the class notes for the teachers included in the materials in Appendix E.)

English postgraduate courses for specialists in the language have been given sporadically in different centres of higher learning since the 1970's. For instance, the University of Havana, ISPJAE, CNIC, and ISPLE (since its creation in 1976), have given graduate courses and seminars to English teachers. Furthermore, in the 1985-86 academic year, a new Faculty of Postgraduate Studies at ISPLE was established; however, none of the courses offered at these institutions have led to postgraduate degrees.

Cuban teachers of English seeking advanced degrees have been sent overseas to Hungary, the USSR, East Germany, and other socialist nations to be supervised for a "doctoral candidacy", a degree offered in socialist countries roughly equivalent to a British M. Litt.

By 1986, some English teachers were doing research in Cuba for the degree of "candidacy", under the supervision of teachers who had obtained their own degrees abroad.

And in the 1987-88 academic year, the first master's-level programme for English language teachers was initiated at the Higher Institute of Medical Sciences in Havana for teachers giving English classes to medical students.

1.3.2.5 English Teaching Outside MINED and MES

The picture of English teaching in post-revolutionary Cuba would not be complete without mention of the programmes at numerous institutions outside of MINED and MES.

Among the oldest, most prominent, and successful is the language school at the Ministry of Foreign Commerce, (MINCEX - Ministerio de Comercio Exterior) in Havana, which has provided courses for its personnel since 1960.

The MINCEX school has often been in the forefront of introducing new methods. It was the first in Cuba to use an audio-visual method, and in 1986, it introduced **Spectrum**, an American series using an oral communicative approach. More than three-quarters of the hundreds of students who have passed through the MINCEX school have studied English.

The Cuban tourist industry has also set up its own programme for training employees in spoken English. According to Roger Doswell, a foreign expert who worked

with the Cuban Institute of Tourism for five years (1978 to 1983), some 10,000 of the 30,000 employees in tourism need some knowledge of English. (100) These employees include guides, telephonists, and desk clerks, all of whom must have ample skills in the spoken language, as well as waiters and bellhops, who require at least a limited acquaintance with the language. The Cuban Institute of Tourism has its own language school in Havana where its personnel receive short and longer term courses.

The National Centre for Scientific Research (CNIC) has had a small but effective language school since the mid-1960's for its own personnel who number several thousand. English courses are also given at many other institutions and ministries, such as the Newspaper Guild for Journalists (UPEC) and the Ministry of Fisheries.

The author's personal experience as a Canadian adviser to the English language programmes at ISPJAE over the decade 1972 to 1982 are dealt with in the following chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

CANADIAN INVOLVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES FOR GRADUATE ENGINEERS (1972-1975)

2.1 An Overview

In January 1972, a group of five Canadian English teachers arrived in Cuba as part of a Canadian-Cuban project to introduce the first master's degree programme in engineering in Cuba. This project involved the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO), and the Faculty of Technology of the University of Havana, called Ciudad Universitaria José Antonio Echeverría (CUJAE), known after 1976 as ISPJAE. (1)

This and the following chapters of the present thesis chronicle the ten-year English language teaching experience at ISPJAE, with special emphasis on the introduction and development of a communicative approach.

The thesis will describe the decade-long involvement of the author in the English programme at ISPJAE and the work of implementing and disseminating the communicative approach in Cuba.

In order to further an understanding of the concatenation of the pedagogical effort undertaken over the ten-year period, the analysis and description will be divided into

its natural phases, three in all. These are as follows:

Phase I: 1972-1975 - Postgraduate Courses

This phase consisted of the teaching by Canadians and two Cuban counterparts of four consecutive courses to four groups of Cuban engineers who planned to do the postgraduate master's degree with Canadian engineering teachers in Cuba and in Canada itself.

The phase was characterized by the search for a more adequate approach than a structural non-situational one such as the Canadians had used in Canada and the Cubans where then using in Cuba. The overriding concern was that of making the learning experience not only motivating but relevant to the real language situations the engineers would encounter when using English.

Phase II: 1975-1977 - The Communicative Approach

The highlight of this phase was the introduction of a communicative approach into Cuba at ISPJAE following the author's attendance during the summer of 1975 at the first five-week Summer Institute for the Teaching of English for Science and Technology at the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington, USA.

During this period, the author, the only remaining CUSO teacher, continued to work in the postgraduate English programme at ISPJAE as teacher trainer, course designer and adviser, while almost all of the active classroom teaching was taken over by her Cuban counterparts and their colleagues.

Phase III: 1979-1982 - The Undergraduate Programme

The highlight of this phase was the introduction of a communicative approach into the undergraduate programme at ISPJAE.

The phase was characterized by resistance on the part of an important English language policy-maker to the approach and the overcoming of this resistance.

The phase describes a two-year field study carried out by the author to attempt to prove the greater efficacy of the communicative approach for the teaching of reading than the one then in use in the undergraduate programme.

During this final phase, the Canadian adviser directed the field study in addition to her work as syllabus writer, materials designer and teacher trainer.

2.2 **Canadian Aid to Cuba: Frame of Reference**

"This agreement with Canada is very important to us. Relations between Cuba and Canada have always been very good and represent a model of what relations between different social regimes should be."

Raul Roa, Cuban Minister of Foreign Affairs, on signing a CIDA-Cuba agreement on February 8, 1974, in Havana.

" ... the CUJAE Project itself illustrates the kind of international cooperation aimed at furthering Cuba's scientific and technological development."

From **The Sherbourne Report 1977**, submitted to CUSO, Ottawa, Canada.

In October 1969, an agreement was signed between CUSO and the Cuban government agency, Centre of Technical Assistance (CAT - Centro de Asistencia Técnica), thus initiating Canada's first aid programme to Cuba, the CUSO-Cuba programme.

Shortly after the signing of this agreement, a Cuban delegation headed by the rector of the University of Havana visited Canada under the auspices of CUSO and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC).

During the visit, the Cubans expressed interest in obtaining Canadian assistance in setting up Cuba's first master's degree programme at the country's most important academic training centre for engineers and architects,

ISPJAE. (2)

In July 1972, following further visits and negotiations, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) awarded a 1.1 million dollar (Canadian) grant for a Canadian-Cuban M.Sc. programme for engineers at ISPJAE.

Inasmuch as the Canadian professors who were to direct and teach the M.Sc. courses were English-speaking, it was vital that the graduate engineers enrolled in the programme be given intensive training in the English language. This responsiblity was delegated to CUSO.

The teaching phase of the M.Sc. engineering programme began in February 1972 with a one-year pilot programme of short-term two to five-5 week intensive engineering courses. Upon completion of this pilot phase in February 1973, a successful three-year programme of master's courses was implemented which came to an end in the summer of 1976.

By April 1977, some 40 engineers had defended their theses and completed their degrees; another 157 were at various stages of writing their theses and a remaining 100 had either still not chosen a thesis topic, or had participated in the programme for the course work only. (3)

Virtually all of these 297 graduate engineers had at some point between 1972 and 1977 passed through the CUSO-directed programme in order to perfect their English.

2.2.1 **Why Canada?**

It is intriguing to speculate why the Cuban government decided in 1969 to seek Canadian help for its first master's degree programme in engineering in view of the very close ties which had, by then, been established with the Soviet Union.

After the imposition of a tight economic and technical embargo on Cuba by the United States in 1960, the Cubans had largely turned to the Soviet Union and other Eastern European nations for technical aid and assistance. By the late 1960's, thousands of Cubans had already been trained in the USSR as middle-level technicians and as engineers from both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at diverse Soviet institutes and universities. In addition, the Soviets had, over a period of some ten years, helped the Cubans keep their American-built factories and vehicles going, to expand their electric power facilities, and to introduce modern technical methods into agriculture.

Why, then, did the Cubans now turn to Canada?

The fact is that Cuba's dependence on U.S. technology dating from the beginning of the century, as well as knowledge of U.S. technological progress after the rupture of relations in 1961, had nurtured in the Cubans a desire to be 'plugged in' to the advanced techniques of their giant neighbour to the north, although, at the same time, they rejected any suggestion that they return to the status quo ante.

One of the aims of the U.S. economic embargo was to prevent the transfer of information and technology to Cuba. The U.S. prohibited the sale of goods such as machines, petroleum, food-stuffs, and even medical supplies, and it also made it illegal for American engineers to go to Cuba or for Cubans to enter the United States to study. Hence, since it was impossible for Cubans to tap in directly to the U.S. educational system, they welcomed the opportunity to acquire American know-how and technology through the 'back door' so to speak, via Canada.

The Canadian government had refused to follow the U.S. lead in breaking relations with Cuba in January 1961, and trade between the two countries had continued without interruption after the revolutionary victory in January 1959. It should be said, nonetheless, that most U.S.-controlled firms in Canada felt bound by the U.S. embargo and refused to do business with Fidel Castro's

government. This included the big three of the American auto industry: Ford, General Motors, and Chyrsler, all of which had large plants in the province of Ontario in Canada. (4)

The Canadian government viewed its economic ties with Cuba as mutually beneficial. Moreover, these relations were part of a larger design projected by the Conservative government of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, and later by the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau, to increase ties -- political, economic, and cultural -- with Third World countries. In the case of Cuba, this meant defiance of U.S. pressure to join in the attempt to strangle Cuba economically through an embargo.

Thus, the Cubans turned to Canada for aid in one of the island's strategic fields for its future development plans: engineering and technology. Within these plans, ISPJAE played a key role. A dramatic example of its importance is the simple fact that in the 19 years prior to the 1959 Revolution, the University of Havana graduated a total of 1,391 engineers and architects, while ISPJAE, in the 19 years after its establishment in December 1964 (5) turned out 17,018 graduates in these two fields. (6)

The Cubans were cognizant of the fact, as Howatt

(1984:221) states in speaking of different circumstances, that "the developmental aspirations of the Third World could only be met in an acceptable span of time by a programme of higher-level training overseas".

In the case of a Canadian-sponsored aid programme, it was neither possible nor feasible for large numbers of Cubans to study in full-time M.Sc. courses in Canada. This was due in part to political restrictions, but most importantly, to Cuba's dire shortage of convertible currency.

Even though maintaining the M.Sc. programme on Cuban soil was more economical than sending all the engineers overseas, it still represented a major financial investment: 1.1 million dollars in aid from CIDA, and an even greater outlay by the Cuban government for such things as payment and housing for CUSO English language personnel, lodging and transportation for Canadian engineering professors while in Cuba, the social and monetary cost of the non-productive hours of graduate students -- all of whom were working engineers -- plus numerous ancillary costs.

2.3 The English Programme: Phase I (1972-1975) - Search for a More Adequate Approach

Since Canadian engineering professors were to give the

M.Sc. courses, the medium of instruction had to be English.

Cuba itself had a limited number of English specialists who were qualified to give the M.Sc. English language courses. However, these could not be spared for the ISPJAE project as they were working in important posts as advisers, course designers, inspectors and professors at teachers' colleges, at the University of Havana's Modern Languages Faculty, and other vital centres of learning.

The need for their skills can be gauged by the fact that 1972 was the year that the critical "teacher gap" had first affected the Cuban educational system, forcing the Ministry of Education to eliminate English courses in Grades 7 and 8.

The major problem facing the newly arrived Canadian specialists is subsumed in a statement by H.G. Widdowson written in 1972, the same year the ISPJAE Project got under way:

> "The problem is that students, and especially students in developing countries who have received several years of formal English teaching, frequently remain deficient in the ability to actually use the language, and to understand its use, in normal communication, whether in spoken or written mode."

Widdowson's observation proved true for Cuba where all of the engineers taking the master's degree had studied English. Most had learned to read technical English

inasmuch as during the 1960's, due to a shortage of adequate Spanish language textbooks, undergraduate engineering students had been obliged to wrestle with English language texts pirated from U.S. publishers. (7) The ability to read in English, however, was not sufficient to meet all the requirements for the M.Sc. course in which the students would need to listen to lectures and take notes, discuss seminar topics, read current bibliography in their field and write papers, including a final thesis.

2.3.1 Genesis and Aims of the Postgraduate English Programme at ISPJAE

Coinciding with the beginning of the M.Sc. engineering programme at ISPJAE in February 1972, five Canadian English teachers who had been recruited by CUSO from the George Brown College of Applied Arts and Technology in Toronto undertook to teach a four-month pilot English language programme at ISPJAE to complement the postgraduate engineering programme. Nobody could foresee that the Canadian involvement in the ISPJAE language programme, though changing in form, content and personnel, would continue for a full decade.

When the Canadians arrived, there had been no experience in English courses for post-graduate engineers at any of

Cuba's technological institutes. In fact, there was only one English programme on the whole island for postgraduate students: the National Centre for Scientific Research in Havana (CNIC - Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Cientificas), which was not part of the Cuban state educational system, offered English courses to a limited number of graduate scientists who worked there.

The Canadian specialists quickly discovered that most Cuban English teachers were not linguistically, methodologically or culturally up-to-date in their field because of long isolation from English-speaking environments. This was due to political factors, but even more so, to a lack of the necessary foreign currency required to send Cubans abroad to non-socialist countries. A case in point is Dr. Rosa Antich, the highest ranking official in English language teaching, who had had only one opportunity to study English methodology outside the country, when she spent the year of 1962 in Czechoslovakia. (8)

An ironic sociolinguistic aspect regarding the choice of Canadian English teachers centred around the desire of the Cubans to have their graduate students prepared to speak like their visiting professors who, it was assumed, would speak "Canadian English". As it turned out, however, the majority of the Canadian engineers who

participated in the programme were not typical native-born Canadian speakers since they had been born and educated in such places as Egypt, Israel, Italy, Greece, Turkey, and even Brooklyn, U.S.A.

2.3.2 Teaching Personnel and Courses Given in Phase I

Prior to the arrival of the Canadian English language specialists in Havana, the Department of English at ISPJAE was exclusively concerned with reading courses for undergraduate engineering students in the first two years of their university studies.

One of the first tasks of the five Canadians and the two experienced Cuban teachers from the undergraduate division, who were assigned to work with them as counterparts, was to set up an organizational framework for the new postgraduate project.

The postgraduate English programme (9) was situated, both physically and administratively, in the Department of Postgraduate Education and International Relations, and came directly under the jurisdiction of the Vice Dean of that department. Consequently, this effectively cut off intercourse between the postgraduate English programme and the existing undergraduate programme (housed in a building on the opposite side of the campus) until the two were unified under a single department in

late 1976, following the restructuring of education.

The Canadian teachers were charged with setting up the programme, giving classes, writing materials, and training their two Cuban counterparts.

During the first course, the role of the counterparts, Gisela Hernández and Gilda Aragón, was to sit in on classes and meetings, and observe. Beginning with the second course in October 1972, they began to actively participate in the teaching and preparation of classes.

Four consecutive English courses, each to a new group of M.Sc. students, were given during the three academic years of Phase I. The average 75 graduate engineers registered in each English course were assigned to five different groups. Upon successful completion of the course, the engineers were permitted to enroll in the M.Sc. programme.

The school calender for the courses given during Phase I was as follows:

First Course - February - May 1972

Second Course - October 1972 - March 1973

Third Course - June 1973 - March 1974

Fourth Course - September 1974 - June 1975

The courses for the engineering students were intensive:

four hours a day, five times a week. The first group was given a 300-hour course and from the second group on, at the request of the Canadian teachers, the course-hours were increased to 480.

Prior to the commencement of each course, all students were interviewed individually and given a 50-item grammar placement test to determine their linguistic competence. On the basis of this assessment, they were then streamed into groups of 10-15. In the cases where it was decided that a student did not require the English course, a credit was automatically given, thus allowing the student to enter directly into the M.Sc. engineering programme.

The number of Canadian English teachers varied: five in the first course, three in the second and third, and five in the the fourth and final course. The first coordinator was David Gallagher, a British chemical engineer who had taught English in several countries of Asia as well as in Canada. In September 1973 he was replaced by Adrienne Hunter when he was appointed director of the overall Cuba-CUSO programme in Cuba. The same two Cuban counterparts remained in the programme throughout. (10)

The Canadian English teachers were aware that success or failure of the Canadian-CUSO M.Sc. programme depended largely on their ability to prepare the Cuban engineers adequately in the language before enrolling in M.Sc.

programme.

They felt added pressure, in part psychological, because their engineer-students were persons with major responsiblities in Cuban industry; agriculture, construction, and education, who demanded that their time be spent efficaciously. One of the students in the second course was the Dean of ISPJAE himself.

2.3.3 Choosing an Approach for the English Courses

The supposition was that the graduate engineers already had good reading skills in English. Therefore, the Cubans had decided that the English course for the M.Sc. programme should concentrate on aural-oral skills in view of the fact that the engineers would have to understand and communicate with the Canadian engineering teachers in the classroom, in tutorial sessions, and in private discussions of both a professional and social nature.

It was also understood that many of the graduate engineers would later go to Canada to pursue their research, and would need to have the kind of mastery of the language that would allow them to cope in both academic and social settings.

The members of the Canadian team were experienced practitioners of oral English courses which stressed a sentence-based approach to the teaching of grammar

through pattern practice, derived from the Bloomfield school of structuralism. These courses were Canadian versions (Carson Martin) of Fries' Oral Approach developed at the University of Michigan in the late 1940's.

The emphasis in the George Brown College English courses had been on acquiring the structures and sentence patterns of English through intense, energetic oral drilling -- individually and in unison -- of sentences. It might be said that the method was structuralism in its purest form as no importance whatsoever was granted to the **content** of the sentences.

The head of the English department at George Brown had gone so far as to approve of the use of "nonsense" words in sentences with the rationale that nothing but **pattern** counted. In practice, however, almost no teacher at the college used the nonsense-word approach in the classroom.

Furthermore, scant attention had been paid at George Brown College to reading and writing, and listening practice had been limited entirely to ear-training exercises, mainly minimal-pair pronunciation drills.

All the Canadian CUSO specialists viewed their teaching experiences at George Brown critically. They were convinced pragmatically that a knowledge of sentence

patterns did not spontaneously lead to an ability to use the language in real situations.

Some years later, H. G. Widdowson in a published paper, (1975) reflected the same belief when he observed:

> "There has been the recognition (in the last few years), provoked by recent work in sociolinguistics and philosophy, that the ability to use the language as a means of communication does not follow as a necessary consequence of learning the language as a formal system."

The Canadian teachers at ISPJAE agreed among themselves that sentence pattern practice was not enough, and moreover, that the **content** of the lesson was very important. Their classroom experience had taught them that learners not only wanted to understand what they were saying, but were also interested in saying something relevant to their needs and interests. Using nonsense words in nonsensical sentences frustrated them, and repeating statements unrelated to their lives bored them.

All the Canadian teachers who volunteered for the Cuba project had taken part in a struggle at George Brown College against the narrow sentence pattern approach. Their battle mirrored the one being waged by other English language teachers of the city of Toronto and in other parts of the province of Ontario.

Richard Handscombe, then director of the ESL programme at

Glendon College, York University in Toronto, was possibly the most outspoken and public critic of the rigid structural approach, while one of the most tenacious supporters of it was the head of the ESL Department at George Brown College, Ray Santin. Handscombe, who was English, had been trained in Applied Linguistics in Britain and represented the Firthian tradition while Santin represented the Bloomfield/Fries American school of structuralism. (11)

The 'dissidents' from George Brown College subscribed to Handscombe's position. They were convinced that the language should be taught in an integrated way in a context which corresponded as closely as possible to the specific needs of a given group of students. This meant giving the students practice in using the language in coherent, real-life situations.

At this point in their careers, the Canadian-CUSO teachers were unaware of the functional-notional, or communicative, approach which Widdowson and others were already advocating and developing. Rather they looked to the situational approach which, if resources permitted, could contain an audiovisual component.

It seemed logical to them from a pedagogical viewpoint that they should include activities that reflected what the engineer-students would be doing in the M.Sc.

programme, such as looking up bibliography in English and writing and discussing papers on topics related to engineering, etc. However, the approach and methodology suited to efficiently meet these needs still lay in uncharted waters.

The Canadians felt their way along as the courses progressed, using classroom feedback and common sense to improve the study materials. Their pragmatic approach dovetailed with the Cubans' own "sobre la marcha" procedure -- that is, meeting problems as they arose -- which characterized early post-revolutionary educational development in Cuba.

The Canadians had never had the opportunity to apply the situational approach in Toronto, although some were familiar with it at both a theoretical and practical level. The author of this thesis had been trained at a special CREDIF course in 1968 at the University of Laval in Quebec which had encompassed both the French audiovisual method **Voix et Images de France** and its English equivalent, the Filipovich-Webster course. Other members of the team had studied Spanish in Mexico through a situational approach and had found it more effective and motivating than the approach they had been using at George Brown College.

While the 'specialists' had never actually taught English

using a situational approach, some Cuban English teachers had. **Voix et Images de France** had been introduced into the French programmes at the University of Havana in the late 1960's, and by 1970, as a result of contacts with the British Council, Alexander's **First Things First**, and the series **The Turners** were being used in different centres of English teaching in Havana. In addition, the Filipovich-Webster course had been introduced at the University of Havana by several Canadian teachers from Laval University, Quebec, working in Cuba in the early 1970's. (12)

ISPJAE, however, had never introduced the situational audiovisual approach into its undergraduate programme because its aim was solely to teach reading. Despite this fact, the Cuban counterparts were very amenable to the idea of breaking away from emphasis on language structure in isolated sentences which was the way they had taught undergraduate English at ISPJAE since its inception in 1964.

Convinced of the superiority of a situational approach, the Canadians decided to introduce it for at least part of the course. Such commercial courses as **First Things First** and **The Turners** were rejected, however, because the very British middle-class context in which the dialogues were set was deemed inappropriate for a

group of graduate engineers embarking on an M.Sc. course who came from a Spanish-speaking Caribbean Third World nation which, moreover, had carried out a socialist revolution.

In fact, the Canadian specialists could find no situational audiovisual courses on the world market that met the needs of the particular Cuban situation which they were called upon to deal with. Therefore, they had only one road open: to produce their own specially tailored materials.

3.4 Syllabus Design

The Canadian team was given free reign at ISPJAE by their administrative superiors to introduce their own ideas.

The design of the syllabus was determined by three essential factors: the engineer-students' needs, the resources available, and the experience of the team.

From the beginning, the team recognized that a technical and scientific content in the courses was essential in order to meet the specific needs of the M.Sc. students. At the same time it was felt that a "general English" content was necessary, not only because the students would need English in general everyday situations, but also for methodological reasons.

Although the structural approach as it had been taught in Toronto had been rejected, it was unanimously agreed that the courses should teach the basic structures of the language. This decision was a direct outgrowth of the team's theoretical background and teaching experience.

The Canadians did not feel prepared to use technological language in their texts to teach the structures. It was therefore decided to write dialogues which used general English. In this sense, a situational approach was only different from the structural approach in **how** the structurally-graded syllabus was presented and practised, i.e. rather than presenting the structures in isolated sentences, they were presented in dialogues and reading passages.

In view of the varied needs of the engineers it was decided that the syllabus should consist of two major components taught simultaneously.

The first was a "general English" component in which the students would practise, in a very systematic and controlled way, the structures of the language through a series of dialogues. For this component, a situational approach would be used.

The second would be a more free-wheeling scientific-technical component where the students would practise, through a variety of different activities, the language

that they would encounter in their textbooks, lectures and discussions with the Canadian engineering professors.

2.3.5 **Teaching Materials**

2.3.5.1 **First Component**

In the initial course which began in February 1972, thirty structurally-graded dialogues which used ISPJAE as their setting were especially written -- as the course itself proceeded -- to teach and/or review all the basic structures of the language.

The two or three dialogues taught each week, as well as drills to practise the structures and pronunciation, were written and home-recorded by the Canadian team on a week-to-week basis.

When the first course finished in May, the 30 dialogues and accompanying exercises were revised and polished and then recorded in the studios of Radio Havana Cuba for use in future courses.

The dialogue series had a continuity of story-line: each dialogue dealt with an episode in the lives of three fictitious Cuban postgraduate engineering students, two men and one woman, (13) who were doing an M.Sc. course at ISPJAE, and a visiting Canadian engineering professor, who was one of their lecturers.

As with all structurally-graded courses, the situations were chosen and the dialogues written so as to work in all the grammatical structures to be taught. Care was taken, however, to find situations relevant to the engineers' personal and professional lives.

For example, the Cuban students, who had been friends as undergraduates, reminisced about their university days together (past tense), discussed what they had been doing since they last saw each other (present perfect), what they were doing now (present continuous and simple present), what courses they would be taking for the master's degree (future), what they thought of their lecturers (simple present), etc.

To introduce some technical -- albeit minimal -- content into the dialogues, the fictitious Professor Johnson, a Canadian, appeared in the series in the context of the lecture room and seminar, answering questions and giving explanations about different technical points.

In order to enhance the technical-scientific component of the course the students were reqired to write and make oral presentations about topics related to their work. While a student presented a report, his colleagues made notes and then participated in the ensuing class discussion.

In the first course, the Canadian specialists were not able to develop special materials for the technical-scientific component due to their heavy workload which consisted of teaching twenty hours of classes a week in addition to producing the dialogues and exercies.

In the second course beginning in October 1972, it was possible to devote time to the development of a fuller, more rounded scientific component.

In the second and third courses, more detailed exercises and grammatical explanations were written as teachers' guides to accompany the polished dialogues. The guides were intended to help ensure the quality of classroom practice and presentation. They were, however, viewed as a teacher's aid and not as a substitute for the teacher's prerogative to introduce other exercises or materials when considered useful.

In January 1974, after two years of evaluating the materials in day-to-day practice, it was decided to prepare a book based on the revised dialogues with complementary exercises. As envisioned, the books would also include reading passages to consolidate and recontextualize the structures, notes for the teacher on methodology, and drawings to illustrate the dialogues, exercises and readings.

From March 1974 to mid-July, the author and May Ann Kainola produced materials for the book. This included reducing the number of dialogues from 30 to 10, hence concentrating more structures in each dialogue (approximately 8 to 10 per dialogue). Two leading Cuban cartoonists, the brothers Ernesto and Juan Manuel Padron, made over 100 drawings.

Care was taken in writing and illustrating the dialogues to put them in a context acceptable to the Cubans. One of the three Cuban protagonists in the dialogues was a woman, and one of the two men was black.

The illustrated textbook, **English on the Tip of Your Tongue**, by Hunter and Kainola, was published by CUSO in Canada in July 1974, and at the same time, new recordings of the dialogues, exercises and stories were made in the studios of the Modern Language Centre at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in Toronto.

These materials were ready for the fourth course beginning in Sept. 1974. During this course, such communicative activities as role playing and games were also introduced to complement the drills and exercises of the textbook.

2.3.5.2 Second Component

A new 'technical' component was introduced in the second

course beginning in October 1972 to replace the sole dependence on students' oral presentations that were used during the first course.

This component was designed and organized around three activities: a film series, invited speakers and "technical" classes.

Films from the BBC-British Council series **The Scientist Speaks** were shown to all the students once a week. There was then a follow-up activity in each of the groups consisting of discussion about the film, questions and answers, and a written summary.

To supplement the exercises which came with the BBC series, vocabulary lists and special exercises related to grammatical examples taken from the narration were prepared. The vocabulary lists were given out before the film was shown and the grammatical exercises were a final post-viewing activity.

Native English speakers or fluent non-native speakers gave a twenty- to thirty-minute talk on some technical subject once every fortnight to all the engineers taking the course. The talk was followed by questions and answers as well as a general discussion from the floor. Among the speakers were foreign specialists who worked for such international agencies as the UNDP, WHO, FAO,

CUSO and CIDA.

A third activity was called "technical classes". Once a week, the students were grouped into teams according to their specialties (e.g. Industrial Engineering, Agricultural Machine Design, etc.).

Each member of each team chose a topic from the syllabus for the engineering course for the M.Sc. programme in their speciality. They would then research it in the library, consulting resource materials which included articles and papers written in English. This was then followed by the preparation and oral presentation of a short paper on the topic to the other members of the team in a seminar-like atmosphere. The other team members took notes and then discussed the topic afterwards with the speaker. The teacher's role was essentially that of a facilitator.

It is interesting to note that these "technical classes" were by nature "communicative" because the students were obliged to use language relevant to their needs as postgraduate engineering students. Moreover, they had to take notes and utilize other study skills which were absolutely essential for their courses with the Canadian engineering professors.

The invited speakers and the technical classes were also a means of introducing authentic activities and materials

into the curriculum, one of the principles of modern-day communicative language teaching. However, as the subject matter was often technical, David Gallagher, a graduate engineer, conducted these activities until the end of the 1973-74 academic year, when he became director of the entire CUSO programme in Cuba.

During the fourth and last course, the responsibility was assumed by the author and May Ann Kainola. Having come from an Arts background, they faced the task of dealing with technical and scientific themes with certain trepidation. As the course progressed, their fears subsided as they learned how to manage the classroom activities without the need to have expertise in every specialized subject. Nonetheless, their inclination was to concentrate on grammatical aspects of the materials.

In the fourth course, the content of the technical classes was expanded to include scientific readings in class. The readings were chosen from materials available in the library or from other sources after consultation with the students themselves, who gave advice as to what would be most relevant and useful to each team for the M.Sc. programme and for future work in their field.

2.4 Professional Development Course for English Teachers

By December 1974, concern was growing among the CUSO

team members that the professional development of the Cuban counterparts had been neglected. Much had been left to osmosis over the previous three years and it was clear that a systematic programme of training was needed before most of the Canadians returned permanently to Canada at the end of the fourth and final course in July 1975.

After consultation with their Cuban counterparts and the Vice-Dean, the Canadians decided to offer a fifty-hour course to the postgraduate English teachers at ISPJAE and to teachers from other institutions where the teaching of the oral aspect of the language was under way or would be so in the near future.

Teachers from the undergraduate programme at ISPJAE who gave only reading courses were not included. The rationale of the Cuban authorities was that the Cuban teachers from the postgraduate course could impart any new knowledge to them at an appropriate moment in the future.

The Special Professional Development Course for English Teachers was given from February to April, 1975. It was the first postgraduate course for English teachers offered in Cuba.

The course was concerned with the teaching of oral "general English" inasmuch as many of the Cuban teachers

did not come from scientific or technical institutions.

This was seen to be the most effective use of the Canadians' time and expertise since such a course would reach an important sector of the English teaching fraternity in Cuba, and from there could be passed on to other Cuban English teachers.

The main objective of the 50-hour course was to improve the Cuban teachers' pedagogic skills in the areas of grammatical presentation and oral fluency. This objective was to be achieved through the presentation of a systematic procedure for the teaching of grammatical structures in context, as well as exposure to new ways of developing oral fluency through interactive activities such as games, debates, role-playing and impromptu talks. The methodological theory was given in lectures followed by workshops in which the teachers put the theory into practice.

All the sessions -- lectures and workshops -- were conducted in English, thus providing an opportunity for the Cuban teachers to improve their linguistic skills while learning techniques for improving pedagogic methods. This was extremely useful since few Cuban English teachers had the opportunity to practise English outside the classroom.

The course was attended by twenty-five teachers: the two

Cuban counterparts from ISPJAE and the rest from such centres as the medical school and Department of Philology of the University of Havana, the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNIC), the Ministry of Foreign Trade (MINCEX), and the Enrique José Varona and Máximo Gorki Pedagogical Institutes. (14)

2.4.1 Evaluation of Professional Development Course

The participants' evaluation of the course revealed that although the whole course was deemed very useful, the most valuable aspect was the part devoted to activities leading to a greater spontaneous use of the language on the part of the student.

There was consensus among the teachers that communicative competence did not automatically develop from a knowledge of grammar and vocabulary; it needed to be learned through practice. It was agreed that this was the most difficult aspect of language learning to foster; that it was the area of language teaching which professional teachers needed most urgently to investigate and develop.

The course demonstrated to both the Cuban and Canadian specialists that there was a need for a new and more adequate approach to English language teaching. It also demonstrated that sharing experiences through intra-disciplinary collaboration was extremely rewarding in

identifying problems and seeking their solutions.

2.5 The Challenge of New Demands

The fourth course (Sept. 1974 - June 1975) was the last language course for those who would go on to do the M.Sc. programmme with Canadian engineering professors. The M.Sc. programme was to continue, but after Feb. 1976, the engineering courses would be given by Cuban professors in Spanish. Despite this change, the objectives of the English programme were to remain the same, with a strengthening of reading in specialized fields.

Interestingly enough, by 1975, engineers entering postgraduate courses no longer had the same reading knowledge of English as their predecessors. This was due to the fact that while their predecssors had studied from engineering textbooks printed in English, they, for the most part, had used books that had been translated or written in Spanish.

In view of the fact that the new postgraduate students were generally more deficient in English, the postgraduate teachers appealed for more than the 480 hours allotted to the previous programmes. Their request was denied. Instead, a policy decision was made to **decrease** the number of hours because, it was alleged, other technical courses of the M.Sc. programme required

a greater chunk of the timetable.

The postgradute English course at ISPJAE now faced the difficult task of designing a course with fewer hours than before within the following parameters:

: the course had to be designed to meet the same objectives
: more attention had to be paid to reading
: more technical and scientific content needed to be incorporated

Cuban teachers were to give the course inasmuch as only one Canadian CUSO specialist would remain in Cuba, the author of this thesis.

The future role of the Canadian specialist was to act as general adviser to the postgraduate programme, course designer, and teacher trainer.

2.5.1 **Evaluation of Past Courses: A Guide to the Future**

The author and her Cuban counterpart, who was head of the postgraduate English programme at ISPJAE, agreed that to confront the new difficult and challenging situation, it was imperative to make a thoughtful analysis and evaluation of the past postgraduate courses and to seek new directions. They decided that it would be beneficial to carry out this analysis in conjunction with their

colleagues at CNIC and the Faculty of Medicine working in postgraduate English courses. These teachers were facing the same problems and were eager to collaborate in the search for solutions. Therefore, in June 1975 a meeting was held to exchange ideas and map out a strategy for the future. (15)

The teachers from the three programmes concurred that effective oral results could only be achieved through the adoption of an approach that went beyond the teaching of grammatical patterns and vocabulary, even though these might be taught and reinforced in contexts consistent with the students' interests and needs. This conclusion then led to the positing of two major questions:

: What would be the role of grammar in a different kind of approach?

: What kind of activities and materials should be used and developed that met the real linguistic needs of the students?

The fact that there seemed to be no simple answers to the questions led the teachers to the further conclusion that it was important to continually evaluate courses, and to do this, not only by analyzing the teaching materials and course results among themselves but, just as importantly, through anonymous student surveys in which the students

would assess both their own learning and the effectiveness of the course content.

2.5.1.1 **The Role of Grammar**

There was agreement that whatever the approach, grammatical practice should not be sacrificed. This view grew out of the common conviction that ideas are expressed in words and sentence structures; if people are to be able to express ideas, they clearly need to have a command of vocabulary and grammar, and to overcome syntactic deficiencies that interfere with communication.

Everyone agreed that for non-beginners, a systematic review of all the basic structures took up too much time and, what was worse, bored the students. There was consensus that it would be more efficient and motivating to concentrate on a review of those grammatical items which the students had not mastered. The question was: how does the teacher determine what these items are and how does he practise them in new and interesting ways?

Different ideas were put forward. One was that grammatical practice should centre around systematic practice with regular and irregular verbs using all the tenses. Another called for a flexible grammmatical syllabus to be drawn up, as the course, progressed in accordance with the needs of the students, demonstrated

by the errors they made in spontaneous speech. This latter would, of course, require considerable experience and expertise on the part of the teacher and could cause alarm in many non-native English teachers.

In the 1975-76 academic year, the first solution was tried out at both CNIC and the Faculty of Medicine, while the second solution was put to the test at ISPJAE in the experimental 240-hour multi-skills course. (See section 3.6.2.2 of Chapter Three.)

By 1988, both solutions, or procedures, were being used in all postgraduate courses at the school of medicine in Havana. (16)

2.5.1.2 **Activities/Materials Related to Student Needs**

The teachers from the three centres of higher learning had all found that activites developed around the viewing of films, lectures given by invited speakers, and oral presentations were effective and motivating.

Because of its integrative nature, of particular value was the work with oral presentations on topics related to the students' areas of speciality. This activity combined the skills of reading, note-taking, speaking and listening: the students carried out bibliographic research using texts written in English, made notes for their presentation to speak from, and then once the

presentation was given, the other members of the class -- who had also made notes during the presentation -- asked questions and discussed the topic with the presenter. Because of the completeness of the practice and its relevance to the students' needs and interests, oral presentations were rated high with both teachers and students.

The teachers did feel, however, that the activity could be improved by some kind of analysis and follow-up practice that went beyond lexical and grammatical correction. For example, the technical classes at ISPJAE had been very successful, but one of their shortcomings was that most of the follow-up correction dealt with grammar and vocabulary, when sometimes the students needed more than that.

The teachers had been capable of detecting incoherence or faulty logic, deficiencies which they pointed out to the student, but they had not been able to consciously show the students **how** to be coherent and how to use language to "mark" logical sequence. Nor did they know how to teach the students the techniques for recognizing the hierarchy of ideas in taking notes or in making a report.

The Canadian team and their Cuban counterparts and colleagues had not yet become aware of the advances in the fields of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics which

would lead them to an understanding of how language works beyond the sentence level, and to an ability to teach, as Widdowson (1972A) said, "the way sentences are used in combination to form stretches of connected discourse". They had yet to discover how to classify and teach the signposts of logical connection and the hierarchy of ideas, and how to consciously zero in on the expression of the "communicative functions" of language. None had come into contact with the developments in the fields of speech act theory, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics, all of which were opening the way to an extra-sentential approach to language teaching and which would provide some of the answers to their questions.

CHAPTER THREE

PHASE II: 1975 - 1977
THE CONTINUING SEARCH FOR A NEW APPROACH

3.1 Introduction

> "Discourse analysis and speech act theory, the study of communicative functions, began to develop as a new approach to linguistic study, and in this instance, the promptings for a move into this new theoretical direction came largely from the demands voiced by practitioners."
>
> Stern 1983: 133

Stern accurately affirms that the study of discourse and speech act theory grew out of a demand voiced by practitioners. Inevitably, this development emerged in great centres of learning -- among them the University of Edinburgh -- in the highly developed nations with a long tradition of linguistic studies.

Developing nations became the potential or, as in the case of Cuba, the actual beneficiaries of this new knowledge through its application in language teaching methodologies.

In the same way that the study of communicative functions "came largely from the demands voiced by practitioners" so, in the Cuban experience, the introduction of the communicative approach to English language teaching arose from a dissatisfaction with older methodologies which could not meet the needs of a dynamically changing

society.

3.2 The Benefits of Discourse Analysis

The teaching methods that resulted from discourse analysis met the urgent needs of English language teaching in Cuba as they did in other countries. This was due to the fact that discourse analysis studies the underlying rules of authentic communication in all fields of human endeavour and all aspects of human activity. Consequently, its application to language teaching goes far beyond the restricted study of the purely formal linguistic aspects of language to show how language is used to express ideas in specialized fields.

The essence of discourse analysis is summed up by Brown and Yule (1983:1) when they state that it is, "necessarily, the analysis of language in use", and go on to say:

> "As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which those forms are designed to serve in human affairs."

With the development of discourse analysis has come an analysis of language beyond the sentence. This has meant a qualitative leap forward in the understanding of what language and communication are all about, and this, in turn, has brought about significant changes in the

teaching of language -- as a first and second language and as a foreign language.

While all the methods based on a purely "linguistic" approach, that is, an approach based on a "description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes which those forms are designed to serve in human affairs", had provided the means for a sound **grammatical** basis in a given foreign language, they had proven inadequate to develop real communicative competence.

These methods included the grammar-translation method of the 19th century, the direct method of the early 20th century, as well as the audiolingual and audio-visual methods of the post-Second World War era.

By the 1960's, teachers the world over were searching for that 'something' which would allow the students to activate the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary that they already had but were often unable to put to use in the real-life situations where they had to understand and express themselves verbally or in writing.

This dilemma on the part of the teachers was most commonly expressed in the statement, "We know what to do at the beginning levels, but what do we do at the second level and beyond?" As has often been said, finding the correct answer means asking the right question, and

formulating the question in terms of levels -- the first grammatical and the other 'something else' -- was perhaps asking the wrong question.

A totally new conception was obviously needed. As Wilkins (1977) so correctly points out:

> "Rather than asking **after** the grammatical foundation has been built up, 'What now will the language be used for?' ... we should consider the communicative purposes of language from the very beginning."

The need for more effective and more efficient language courses was felt most strongly in those Third World countries which were struggling to overcome the legacy of illiteracy, backwardness, poverty, and underdevelopment. The key to advancement, in their minds, was scientific and technological development. It followed, therefore, that a knowledge of the languages of the developed world was essential for a transfer of scientific and technical information.

English, the language of the most scientifically-advanced nation of the world, the United States, as well as of other highly developed countries such as Canada and Great Britain was, by the late 1960's, the most widely studied foreign language in the Third World and had become the lingua franca in many areas such as parts of the Middle East.

Many Third World nations sent their students to developed

countries overseas to study in those fields of greatest social and economic relevance to their development plans at home, for example medicine, engineering, and agriculture. This led to a need for specialized language courses for non-English speaking students arriving in those advanced countries where English was either the native language (e.g. Britain) or the lingua franca (e.g. Sweden). (1)

It is known that the majority of overseas students had studied English in their own countries before going abroad, and, for the most part, had a good theoretical grasp of the language as it had been taught in commercially-available courses. However, as these courses concentrated on grammar, and always used an 'idealized' form of both the written and spoken language, the students were not always prepared to cope in face-to-face confrontation with authentic language.

Brown (1977:2) and others have referred to the problems which overseas students so often encountered once they found themselves in an English-speaking country: understanding the local people speaking at normal rates of speech; interpreting the local press; and even having trouble in their university and college lectures.

In order to overcome these deficiencies, special courses began to appear in the early 1970's. Britain, possibly

because of the greater influx of overseas students, and because of the tradition of a sociolinguistic approach to language teaching stemming from Firth, took the lead in this new kind of course. (2)

Rather than taking grammar as the starting point of a teaching syllabus, the functions (uses) or, in some cases, the skills that a student would require for dealing with language became the organizing unit. In most cases, the grammar was then taught in relation to these uses or skills, although some authors interpreted this new trend to mean that grammar was to be taught only minimally if at all -- an extremist view which the pioneers in the new trends, Allen, Widdowson, Wilkins and others, never advocated.

3.3 Encounter with the New Approach: University of Washington Summer Institute 1975

My life began in ELT
in 1953
But then I move to ESL,
And later move to EFL,
And then to EST.

I've scarcely mastered EST
When **special** ESP
Gives extra boost to my career,
And as I master **that** I hear
An ETIC voice beside my ear
Refining it and bringing near
ESP **specifically.**

Now, even more specifically
I'm into EOP:
For Gulf, El Al, and ITT

And even for the BBC
(But not -- thank God -- with Jones' RP!)
I work my speciality;
My local university
's specific needs for EAP
Are also catered for by me --
They pay me suitably.

(Poem from **English for Specific Purposes, Modern English Teacher Publications,** (ed. Susan Holden), 1977.)

As the poem indicates, the teaching of English has undergone many changes, not only in methodology but also in conception.

It was during the first half of the twentieth century that the teaching of English as a foreign language emerged as an autonomous profession and was referred to simply as English Language Teaching, ELT.

In the 1950's, a distinction was made between English as a "foreign" language, EFL -- English taught overseas in non-English speaking countries to people requiring the language as a tool and means of communication -- and English as a "second" language, ESL.

ESL itself has two quite different meanings. In the first instance, it denotes the situation where English is taught in order to play a unifying role -- in an official instrumental sense -- in a linguistically diverse community or country, such as India, where it is spoken alongside an indigenous language. ESL also refers to English taught to non-English speakers who have emigrated

to developed English-speaking countries since the Second World War where they are required to use English in much the same way as they do their own native languages.

By the 1970's, it was common to talk about English for Specific Purposes (ESP) of which English for Science and Technology (EST) was one such specific purpose. It was not really a new idea, however. The concept of teaching language for specific purposes was conceived as early as 1921 when H.E. Palmer (1964:129) pointed out:

> "We cannot design a language course until we know something about the students for whom the course is intended, for a programme of study depends on the aim or aims of the students". (3)

The year 1975 marked this author's first encounter with EST when, backed by ISPJAE and financed by a CUSO scholarship, she attended the First Summer Institute for the Teaching of English for Science and Technology (EST), at the University of Washington, in Seattle, Washington.

EST was a new approach to the teaching of English to professionals (or future professionals) who needed it for scientific and technological purposes. It was not EFL applied to a scientific and technical content, as exemplified in early books made up of scientific texts and word lists such as Gastón's book for Cuban engineers or A. J. Herbert's **The Structure of Technical English**, which used a register approach (i.e. the teaching of the

vocabulary and grammatical structures specific to the scientific register).

EST did not discard the teaching of the vocabulary and grammar specific to scientific and technical language. Its approach was to first analyze that language from the point of view of what the user (e.g. the author scientist) **did** with the language in giving information about scientific and technical events and facts, and then to teach the grammar and vocabulary relevant to those communicative uses, or functions.

Analysis revealed that it was possible to identify a linguistic system underlying the way in which scientists express their investigation of the phenomena of the universe. In other words, there are linguistic indicators of description, classification, definition, explanation, hypothesis, generalization, specificity, etc., just as there are linguistic indicators of grammatical categories such as present and past tense, morphological categories of noun, adjectives, etc.

The Washington Institute had attracted participants from all corners of the world. Most of them came from or taught in Third World nations where English was a vital tool for the scientific-technical revolutions which these developing countries required. The countries represented were: Israel, Roumania, Denmark, Holland, Singapore, The

Phillipines, Kuwait, Venezuela, Cuba, Canada, and the United States.

All had come looking for the answer to the thorny problem of how to teach more in less time to people with very specific needs and to do so effectively. The answer did not come easily. Even within the new and more advanced ideas, there were diverse approaches. This is commented on by Howatt (1984: 222) who states:

> "The communicative philosophy of the seventies encouraged three rather different approaches to ESP, though they shared many common principles."

Howatt describes the three approaches as follows:

> "One emphasized a functionalist interpretation of 'the way English is used' which made extensive use of syllabus categories drawn from discourse analysis (definition, explanation, and other rhetorical acts)... The second ... drew on.the notional rather than the functional strand ... with categories such as dimension, measurement, and so on. The third type took a different starting-point, not in language use but rather in the communicative activities and skills, which the learner would have to perform in his studies, his work, or whatever he was preparing for..."

The communicative approach, as presented at the Summer Institute, corresponded to the first approach described by Howatt. It was restricted in its use to the analysis of written scientific and technical texts and was based on the recognition of the "acts of communication" (Allen and Widdowson: 1974:x) or "rhetorical functions" of

written scientific language (Trimble, Todd and Selinker, organizers of the Summer Institute). These "rhetorical functions" were later referred to by Widdowson (1979) as "communicative functions".

The sixteen participants -- all experienced teachers -- had, without exception, concentrated on the analysis and understanding of the grammar and vocabulary contained in a given text as the means of gleaning a given author's message. They had been using, for the most part, the formal approach of register analysis and had not encountered, until the Institute, the discoursal approach predicated in the works of Trimble, Allen & Widdowson, the Council of Europe, and the Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics.

Nonetheless, all of the participants recognized that a study of the vocabulary and grammatical structures of a text was not sufficient for a real understanding of the message of that text. They were encouraged to now discover an approach whose aim was, as Allen and Widdowson enunciated (1974:ix): "not to teach more grammar, but to show students how to use the grammar they already know" and to "activate ... (the students') considerable dormant competence in English."

The unit of analysis studied at the Summer Institute was the paragraph, classified by Trimble et al as

"conceptual" and "physical" (cf. Trimble 1985:15). A conceptual paragraph was that part of a written text which contained one idea and its development. This might correspond to one physical, or indented, paragraph, to more than one physical paragraph, or possibly, to only part of one physical paragraph. In the latter case, the physical paragraph would necessarily contain more than one conceptual paragraph. In other words, according to this definition of paragraphing, there is no one-to-one correspondence between physical and conceptual paragraphs.

In daily sessions, the participants analyzed physical and conceptual paragraphs; the rhetorical functions of EST paragraphs (specifically: generalization, definition, classification, description, partition); the techniques of development of EST paragraphs (e.g. contrast, example, comparison, analogy); the grammar of EST, in particular, the use of the article, passives and statives, noun compounds, tense and time.

The author left the Summer Institute with the conviction that the introduction of this new "rhetorical", or "communicative", approach to the teaching of EST -- specifically to the teaching of reading -- could open up new horizons and possibilities for postgraduate English at ISPJAE and other Cuban centres concerned with science and technology.

A resource room had been set up at the Summer Institute which contained a wide selection of books and articles for study and perusal. When the author returned to Havana in late August 1975, she took with her over 40 current publications in the field of EST, including several books from Allen and Widdowson's new **English in Focus** series. The importance of this can only be understood in the light of Cuba's isolation from the English-speaking world at this moment of the Revolution's history.

3.4 Sequel to the Summer Institute: An Overview 1975 - 1977

Immediately upon the author's return to Havana, it was decided by the Vice-Dean of Postgraduate Education at ISPJAE, in consultation with the head of Postgraduate English, Gisela Hernández, and the author as her counterpart and General Adviser to the programme, that the ideas brought back from the Summer Institute should be disseminated as widely as possible. Priority, however, was to be given to those teachers directly involved with the teaching of English for Science and Technology.

This was the beginning of what was to become a highly productive two years, during which time courses and seminars expounding the communicative approach were held,

not only at ISPJAE but at other institutions in Havana.

One of the key moments in this period was a week-long CIDA-sponsored visit in March 1977 by Dr. P.J.B. Allen, lecturer from the University of Edinburgh and one of the leading proponents of the new approach.

By as early as January 1976, the functional interpretation of the communicative approach had been incorporated into some of the English programmes at ISPJAE, CNIC, the Higher Institute of Medical Sciences, and the University of Havana. This was accompanied by a great deal of experimentation and intradisciplinary interaction and collaboration among the teachers and course designers at these institutions.

What follows is a brief account of the activities undertaken between September 1975, when the author returned from the EST seminar in Washington, and July 1977, when the author left Cuba temporarily for sixteen months to study in Great Britain where the ideas had originated.

3.4.1 First EST Course for English Teachers in Higher Education in Cuba

The theory of communicative functions, along with examples of these new EST courses, was introduced in Cuba for the first time by way of a two-part 48-hour

professional development course held at ISPJAE in two sessions with a five-month interval between them: November - December 1975 and in May 1976.

The author designed and taught the course to 25 participants, all of whom were involved in teaching English for Science and Technology. They included the ISPJAE English teachers from both the postgraduate and undergraduate programmes, as well as representatives from CNIC, ISCM-H (both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes), and the University of Havana Dept. of English for Non-English majors (a service department).

The first part of the course, held in Nov. and Dec. 1975, consisted of ten sessions of three hours each and covered the essential points of the Washington course. Many of the same materials were used, in particular the articles and the paragraphs for rhetorical analysis. The second part of the course consisted of the participants' relating the experiences they had had in using the approach in the intervening five months between Parts I and II of the course.

The syllabus for Part I was as follows:

Session 1:

Introduction: Looking at Language as Communication: an overview of the new trends in language teaching

Session 2:

Introduction to the Rhetoric of EST

Paragraphing - Types and Methods of Development

Session 3:

Rhetoric: Definition - Formal and Informal

Session 4:

Rhetoric: Classification

Session 5:

Rhetoric: Classification and Partition

Grammar: The Use of the Article

Session 6:

Rhetoric: Description - Physical, Functional, Process

Grammar: Passives and Statives

Session 7:

Discusssion of two articles by Trimble et al:

Grammar and Technical English

Presupposition and Technical Rhetoric

Comparison of EST and SST (Spanish for Science and Technology)

Session 8:

Analysis of a scientific text (class assignment)

Grammar: Tense and Rhetoric

Noun Compounding

Session 9:

Application of theory: Analysis of a unit from the **English in Focus** series, **English in Physical Sciences** (Unit II)

Session 10:

Rhetorical analysis of a scientific text by participants

Discussion of two articles by H.G. Widdowson:

EST in Theory and Practice

An Approach to the Teaching of Scientific English Discourse

Evaluation of Part I by participants

Summary

Part II of the EST Course for Teachers, held in May 1976, five months after Part I, was designed as a series of six workshops of three hours each, in which the participants described how they had applied the new ideas in the intervening months. In addition to the description of their experimentation, there was an analysis and evaluation of the results obtained.

With the exception of the undergraduate programmes at ISPJAE and ISCM-H, many of the ideas had been incorporated into the reading aspect of programmes at the four centres that had taken part in the course. For the most part, the **Focus** series had been used directly, had been adapted, or had been used as a model for the writing of other materials.

The **Focus** materials differed from the Washington materials of Trimble et al in that no classification of

definitions was made. Trimble's category of "informal" definition (Trimble et al 1985) was treated in the **Focus** materials as a statement of classification. The author believed that the Widdowson and Allen nomenclature was more accurate and so the distinction made by the Washington investigators was eliminated in the materials used at ISPJAE.

Those who had incorporated the new ideas were enthusiastic about them, particularly in their cacpacity as language teachers. They had discovered a new way of looking at language which allowed them to understand texts better, and they were eager to learn more about the new theories and their applications. Most felt, however, that it was too soon to evaluate whether or not the teaching of communicative functions and the features of cohesion (reference and logical connection) qualitatively improved the **students'** understanding of texts.

3.4.2 **Talks and Seminars given at Other Institutions**

Between January and September 1976, the author was invited by other institutions to give lectures, followed by discussions, on the communicative approach to English teachers at the Pedagogical Institute Enrique José Varona (May 1976) and at the Ministry of Foreign Commerce (June 1976).

A large-scale conference was then organized in September 1976 at CNIC which was attended by over 100 English teachers, methodologists, textbook writers, and inspectors from all levels of education.

It was as a result of this latter conference that a programme incorporating the new ideas was begun at the Pinar del Rio campus of the Pedagogical Institute in January 1977, developed by Cesar Balmañes.

3.4.3 Incorporation of a Communicative Approach in Postgraduate English Courses

3.4.3.1 At ISPJAE

A. Reading Course for M.Sc. Students

(3 groups)

January - May 1976

130 hours

B. Multi-skill EST Course for M.Sc. Students

(1 group)

February - May 1976

240 hours

C. Multi-skill EST Course for for M.Sc. Students

(6 groups)

September 1976 - June 1977

240 hours

D. Teacher training course for ISPJAE undergraduate teachers

July 1977

Professors: Gisela Hernández

Mercedes Sorzano

Adviser: Adrienne Hunter

3.4.3.2 At Centres other than ISPJAE

A. CNIC

starting in January 1976

B. Higher Institute of Medical Sciences, Havana

i. Postgraduate Programme

starting in January 1976

ii. Undergraduate programme

starting in September 1977

C. University of Havana - courses for undergraduate students other than language students

starting in January 1976

D. Pedagogical Institute Enrique José Varona, Pinar del Río Campus

starting January 1977

E. Ministry of Fisheries

Sept. 1976 - June 1977

- a special CIDA-sponsored one year course for

students in the Merchant Marine

F. Ministry of Public Health

Sept. 1976 - June 1977

- a special CIDA-sponsored one-year course for medical technicians going to the University of Waterloo in Canada for special training

3.5 Dr. Patrick Allen's Visit to Cuba (March 17-24, 1977)

By the end of 1976, several postgraduate courses using the communicative approach had been offered not only at ISPJAE but also at CNIC and ISCM-H. These were, in large part, based on the **English in Focus** series, co-edited by Allen and Widdowson. Moreover, as explained in the preceding sections, by this time a 48-hour professional development course and several seminars had been given by the author.

In January 1977, upon learning that Dr. Allen was on leave from Edinburgh to teach at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in Toronto for the academic year 1976-77, it was decided to invite him to Cuba. At the request of CUSO, the Canadian embassy in Havana provided funding for a one-week visit.

The purpose of Dr. Allen's visit was, in his words (Allen 1977), "to inspect the teaching of English to students of

science and technology at a representative selection of university-level institutions in Havana and to advise on the development of specialised syllabuses and materials."

The highlights of Dr. Allen's visit were:

1. Lecture (followed by discussion) held at CNIC on March 19 on **New Directions in English Language Teaching.** This four-hour session was attended by 90 invited English language teachers and policy-makers representing the country's major institutes of research and institutions of medium- and higher-level education.

2. A full morning workshop on March 20 on ELT methodology with 21 teachers and policy-makers from CNIC, ISPJAE, ISCM-H, the Pedagogical Institute, the Ministry of Public Health, the Institute of Fisheries, and the Ministry of Education.

3. Informal half-day visits to ISPJAE, CNIC, and ISCM-H to analyze and discuss, with all the teachers involved, the EST programmes which had been developed subsequent to the EST course given at ISPJAE between Nov. 1975 and May 1976.

Dr. Allen expressed satisfaction with the work being done in Havana and particularly praised the postgraduate English programme at ISPJAE and the one at ISCM-H

developed there by Professor Marjorie Moore, Head of the Language Department. He assessed them as good as any he had seen in his years of teaching in the M.Sc. course in Edinburgh to overseas students from around the world, and in visiting other countries as a consultant in Applied Linguistics. (4)

The ideas which Dr. Allen brought with him to Cuba were widely disseminated and helped to spread information throughout Cuba about the new language teaching trends. Full transcripts of both the March 19th lecture and the March 20th workshop were run off in 200 copies each and distributed to teachers, textbook-writers, policy-makers, and administrators in other institutes of research and higher education in Havana. A Spanish translation was also made of the March 19th lecture and 200 copies were distributed among the non-English speaking members of the language teaching community. (5)

One month after his visit to Cuba, Dr. Allen submitted a nine-page report summarizing his conclusions and recommendations. Copies of the report were sent to CUSO and to the Canadian Embassy in Havana, as well as to ISPJAE, CNIC, ISCM-H, the Pedagogical Institutes of Havana and Pinar del Rio, MINSAP, the Institute of Fisheries, and to the Postgraduate Section of MES. (See Appendix B for photocopies of these documents.)

3.6 1975-76 English Courses for Engineering Master's Students at ISPJAE

During the academic year 1975-1976, three different courses were given to three different groups of graduate engineers at ISPJAE. Two were experimental and incorporated new ideas brought from Washington. The third, begun before the EST course for teachers had started, was a 600-hour traditional-type course designed and taught by the Cuban teacher, Gilda Aragón.

3.6.1 Non-experimental 600-hour Course

This course, given to a group of graduate engineers who had had little or no English previously, was based largely on Hunter and Kainola's **English on the Tip of Your Tongue**. It followed very closely the methodology established for using this textbook at the time of its writing in 1974, emphasizing structural drills and minimal-pair pronunciation practice. This is what the teacher felt comfortable with.

Although the objectives of the course were to fulfill the English language requirement for a master's degree in engineering, it did not include any specialized technical materials, again largely because the teacher did not feel adequate to the job of dealing with such materials.

3.6.2 **Experimental Courses**

The two experimental courses were not of the same length and did not have the same objectives. Both were given in the second half of the 1975-76 academic year, in the period between January and May, and both incorporated some of the new communicative ideas.

3.6.2.1 **130-hour Reading Course**

The first of the experimental courses was a reading course and was the first attempt at ISPJAE to give a relatively short postgraduate English course. (6)

The objective, as specified by the Vice-Dean of Postgraduate Studies, was limited to preparing graduate engineers to be able to read scientific texts and journals in English rapidly with complete understanding. For this 130-hour course, it was decided to use units from two of the books from the **English in Focus** series: **English in Physical Science** and **English in Mechanical Engineering.**

3.6.2.2 **240-hour Multi-Skill Course**

The second experimental course began one month after the first, in February 1976 and was given by the author to a

group of twelve engineers. The students represented a mixture of learners of medium and advanced levels.

The course had the same overall objective as the non-experimental 600-hour course, that is, to prepare the students to fulfill the language requirement for a master's degree in engineering.

The specific objectives could be spelt out as:

: to understand spoken English;

: to be able to speak about subjects related to the students' fields, as well as to social and political themes;

: to be able to read and understand materials about subjects in their field.

In accordance with the ideas that had been put forward in the intradisciplinary discussion between teachers at ISPJAE, CNIC and ISCM-H in June 1975, and basing herself on the new trends encountered at Washington and in the recent literature, the author decided to organize the syllabus around a variety of activities and themes, rather than solely around graded grammatical structures. The basic grammatical structures of the language would be reviewed quickly but emphasis would be placed on those aspects of grammar and pronunciation which represented real problem areas for particular students as identified in the errors they made in writing and

speaking.

The course activities included working with dialogues, recorded science reports, news reports, songs, question and answer practice, oral presentations, games, written scientific texts. A brief description of the major activities follows.

Dialogues

All the dialogues from **English on the Tip of Your Tongue** were used, but not for memorization, acting-out, and pattern practice. Rather, the objective was for the students to practice listening comprehension, retelling and discussion, followed by the students making up their own dialogues on the same theme.

In previous courses, in accordance with audiolingual principles, students had been discouraged from using grammatical structures that they had not yet 'studied' in order to avoid making mistakes, e.g. they were not to attempt using the past tense until they had studied it during the particular course they were taking. (This did not mean that they had never studied it. In fact, most students had studied all the tenses of the language in one course or another in their academic lives.)

This policy was now radically changed. The students were encouraged to express what they wanted to say, regardless

of whether or not a particular grammatical form had been introduced or reviewed in class. Correction and practice of faulty grammatical structures came later, often after they had been identified by the students themselves from sentences written on the board by the teacher.

Oral Fluency Activities

Apart from the dialogues, other activities used to improve oral fluency included learning songs, playing games, and making impromptu oral presentations about topics related to current events.

Question and Answer Practice

In this activity, a pair of students asked each other questions while the rest of the class listened. (The methodology of group and pair work was as yet unknown.) The prompts came from the teacher in the form of pictures, cue cards or verbal instructions. An attempt was made to make these exercises relevant and informative rather than something purely mechanical like the audiolingual structural drills.

The objective was to improve the students' command of the verb system of the language and to practice the interrogative form with auxiliaries, which presents a special problem for the Spanish-speaker.

Science Reports

These were written and recorded by a fictitious 'Reginald Decibel', scientific reporter for an equally fictitious 'World Scientific News'. In fact, although it was never public knowledge, they were a contribution to the course by the local BBC correspondent.

The Science Reports were one- to two-minute reports on recent discoveries and inventions reported in the world press. The students listened to the report in class, answered multiple-choice recorded questions, and then discussed the contents. Although there was no language lab available, out-of-class listening periods, using the teacher's tape recorder, were scheduled for each student. This included further listening, answering multiple-choice questions, and then making a transcription of the report. At the end of these activities, the teacher provided a copy of the report so that the students could detect his mistakes.

Written Materials for Reading

In addition to the Science Reports, which were used for reading as well as for listening, the students also studied selected units from the **English in Focus** series.

Writing Practice

The students practised writing paragraphs, guiding themselves by the procedure outlined in Imhoof and Hudson's **From Paragraph to Essay.** They were also given specially-prepared materials for the writing of letters to request scientific abstracts, etc. related to their professional lives as engineers engaged in production and research.

Grammatical Reinforcement and Error Correction

In accordance with the ideas expressed at the intradisciplinary meeting held in June 1975, a pedagogic innovation was tried out in the area pertaining to all spontaneous oral activities.

The teachers from the three centres (ISPJAE, CNIC, and Medicine) who had met the previous June had noted that the students did benefit from correction -- and were in fact motivated by it -- but only if it were a **follow-up** activity. They had observed that if the teacher intervened to correct -- unless specifically requested to do so -- the students were more inhibited and reluctant to speak than if they were left to communicate freely and were then corrected later.

In order to answer the question "What kind of follow-up

activity would be most beneficial?", the author decided on the following procedure:

> :note down all the phonetic and grammatical errors
>
> :classify them according to type
>
> :try to analyze them for the cause: native language interference; interference from other languages they had studied (as was often the case with phonetic errors); overgeneralization of syntactic rules, and so forth.

Although there was no awareness of present-day error analyis theory, this procedure very closely approximated it and coincided with Corder's view (1981) of its relevance to language teaching:

> "The ultimate object of error analysis is explanation ... We cannot make any principled use of his (the learner's) idiosyncratic sentences to improve teaching unless we understand how and why they occur."

The most frequently occurring errors and those which most hindered communication were selected and dealt with at the end of the session, at the beginning of the next session, or in one of subsequent sessions.

First the selected "idiosyncratic sentences" were written on the board and the class was asked to identify the syntactic errors and then correct them. If it seemed useful -- and was possible -- the teacher explained why the error had been made. At times, the students

themselves could state the reason.

In the case of native-language interference, a comparison of the two structures would be made, followed by special practice such as elicitation of other examples, oral drilling, and oral or written translation (from English to Spanish and/or from Spanish to English) of short passages containing the confusing structure.

In a homogeneous language teaching situation this type of comparative analysis was possible and the students commented that they found it useful. This practice was, however, at variance with the guidelines established by the Ministry of Education for the teaching of English at the secondary school level, which did not advocate the use of the mother tongue in the classroom, not even to compare the two languages in areas where there was bound to be interference.

Where overgeneralization was the cause of error, the relevant rules and exceptions were explained. As reinforcement, other examples were elicited or given, followed by some kind of practice, including pattern practice.

In pronunciation work, all minimal-pair practice was abandonned. It was substituted by emphasizing the ryhthm and stress of English as well as six main areas in

pronunciation identified as needing constant correction and practice for Spanish-speaking students. These were:

: unstressed vowels

: 'ed' endings which do not produce an extra syllable, i.e. 'ed' after all sounds except /t/ and /d/

: final consonants, and in particular, final 's'

: final 'es' after a sibilant, which produces an extra syllable

: initial 's' before a consonant;

: unstressed 'the', i.e. 'the' before a consonant sound. (7)

It became clear that by concentrating on these six main areas as well as on overall sentence stress and intonation, one could improve the students' pronunciation in a way that the same amount of time -- or even far more -- spent on minimal-pair practice could never do.

After every oral fluency exercise, a very rapid two- or three-minute drill would be done on one or more of these areas using examples from the students' own errors. These short drills were also sometimes used as short fillers between activities to change the pace and vary the activity.

To improve overall rhythm and intonation, reading aloud was practised from the written texts that they studied.

3.6.3 Evaluation of the 1975-76 English Courses

Of the two experimental courses, the 240-hour multi-skill course was, by far, the more successful, from the standpoint of both student motivation and results obtained.

The evaluation of the 130-hour Reading Course, made by the students upon its completion, revealed that the three groups of engineers -- whose knowledge of English ranged from poor to advanced -- found the **Focus** approach to reading interesting but felt that there needed to be more variety of format in the units. Virtually the same exercises were repeated over and over again with little progression from the simple to the more complex. (For example, the exercises on reference showed no progression or variation in the type of question).

Furthermore, the students were dissatisfied with the limited course objectives, and unanimously voiced their desire for an oral component. Although all classes were conducted in English, this did not satisfy the students' desire to be "learning how to speak" inasmuch as their oral responses were seldom corrected and there were no specific activities aimed at developing oral proficiency.

The students' objections to a postgraduate course that concentrated solely on reading were heeded by the Vice-

Dean of Postgradute Education and this type of course was never repeated. This decision may have partly rested on the success of the other experimental course, that was designed with just under twice the number of hours (the 240-hour multi-skill course), in which reading was included for reinforcement of oral skills.

The students' evaluation of the 240-hour multi-skill course showed that the use of materials from the **Focus** series was more successful than it had been in the 130-hour course. The primary reason for this was that reading constituted only a portion of the course and was used as a basis for oral discussion, while in the 130-hour reading course, the materials from **Focus** had constituted the entire course and were found to be monotonous.

The students rated all the activities highly. They particularly liked the way that grammatical correction and reinforcement was handled. They commented that it had been very useful to recognize for themselves their problems when the sentences containing the error(s) had been written on the board for the class to analyze. In almost all cases, the person who had made the error could remember saying it. The comparison with Spanish was also found to be helpful and enlightening.

The results of the 600-hour traditional (i.e. non-experimental) course were compared with those of the 240-

hour experimental one, by means of the same final test. Both groups did equally well, proving that students with much the same linguistic background could achieve the same results by using a different approach.

This discovery was encouraging since -- at the end of the 1974-75 academic year -- the Canadian team and their Cuban counterparts had requested more time for the postgraduate English courses, and had been told that, regrettably, there could only be **less** time available.

The success of the 1975-76 240-hour experimental course led to a course designed along the same lines, with the same or similar activities, the following academic year. But this time the course was taught entirely by Cubans, with the author supervising the teaching and systematizing the materials.

3.7 1976-77 240-hour Course for Engineering Master's Students

In the 1976-77 course, there were six groups of students, thus requiring six teachers. Gisela Hernández, one of the two Cubans who had worked as a counterpart with the author since the beginning of the CUSO programame, assumed the role of head teacher, and two teachers from the second-year undergraduate programme were moved to the postgraduate programme: Mercedes Sorzano, a veteran

teacher in the department, and Carmen Sam, a recent and extremely promising university graduate. Two other teachers were hired on contract: Olga Larraz, a teacher with many years' experience, and Osvaldo Monteagudo, also a recent graduate. Gilda Aragón, the second of the author's counterparts since 1972, was the sixth teacher.

Under the author's tutelage, Gisela Hernández gave methodological guidance at weekly meetings with the other teachers. In addition, the author made regular classroom visits followed by discussion with the teacher about difficiencies observed in pedagogical, linguistic, or technical/content matters. The classroom visits were thought of, not as 'evaluation' sessions, but rather guidance sessions. This was a point of contention with the head of the department, who wanted the author to rigidly grade each teacher's performance, taking into account such aspects as punctuality and the use of the blackboard.

The course was divided into three clearly defined stages:

Stage I - 60 hours

The objective of this stage was an intensive review of grammatical structures and pronunciation. The dialogues and stories in **English on the Tip of Your Tongue** as well as the **Mr. Monday** songs formed the basis for the review,

Stage II - 140 hours

This stage concentrated on **using** the language, just as the second component of the original course had done, but the students remained in their 'streamed' groups. Thus the activities were of a more general nature rather than specific to the students' fields.

The main innovation in this phase was the introduction of an EST approach, particularly to the teaching of reading. Materials from the **English in Focus** series were used to familiarize the students with the main communicative functions of scientific language, specifically those of definition, classification, and description and to make them aware of reference features and logical connection. These same readings were also used for reading aloud in order to improve rhythm and stress.

Other motivating activities included during Phase II were the following:

: spontaneous oral presentations in which the students were asked to define X, classify Y, describe Z, report on W, etc.

: work with the Science Reports, which were polished in style and increased in number. In addition, aural comprehension exercises were written to accompany them

: listening to songs by American singers such as Paul Robeson, Tom Lehrer, Joan Baez

: question and answer sessions to practise different verb tenses of irregular verbs

: dictation/controlled note-taking exercises from Joan Morley

Stage III - 40 hours

In this last stage, the students were grouped according to their specialities. As there were seven groups and only six Cuban teachers, the author took one group.

Stage III was mainly devoted to reading and discussing specialized materials found in journals and textbooks of the students' fields of specialty. In keeping with the new EST approach which had been adopted, the texts, chosen with the help of the students themselves, were analyzed in terms of functions. **Focus**-type exercises to practise reference, connectors, and the identification of different functions were specially written by each teacher in consultation with the author.

These classes required many hours of preparation far exceeding the two and a half hours of preparation per hour of original class allowed in the teachers' work plans. In fact, the teachers devoted more than four hours for each hour of class. However, their enthusiasm for the work, because it was something new and motivating, was such that they only complained about the

lack of time in a day, never about the task itself.

Stage III also included those films from **The Scientist Speaks** which were of interest to particular engineering fields: **Bridges** for civil engineers; **Food Preservation** and **Oil** for chemical engineers; etc.

The decision to make attendance compulsory only for those whose speciality would be treated in the given film was, in fact, a concession to a some engineers who complained in previous courses that not all the films in the series were of interest to all specialities of engineering. This criticism was not shared by others who felt all of the films broadened their knowledge of the world of science and technology in general.

Another motivating activity during this stage of the course were the English-speaking guest speakers who, themselves engineers, lectured to their Cuban colleagues in the same field. In addition, there were two general lectures for all the engineers enrolled in the English course. When possible, ISPJAE faculty members were used as speakers, thus affording them an opportunity to brush up and maintain their English.

3.7.1 Evaluation of the 1976-77 Course

Although the results of the course were considered excellent, (See Appendix B: Report on the Postgraduate

English Course for 'Especialistas' 1976-77), the evaluation sheet filled out by the students at the end of the course indicated a desire for a longer course with more than the 40 hours allotted for work with specialized materials. (8)

In regard to this aspect of the course (Stage III), the author had observed that work with specialized materials presented a problem for language teachers who had been trained within a framework of the Humanities.

Although some of the English teachers at ISPJAE had been working with engineering students for many years, their background in science and technology and their knowledge of science in general was generally weak. For this reason, almost all the teachers felt much more comfortable teaching General English rather than English which was of relevance to a particular student's field of study in engineering.

Another observation was that the type of reading exercises used in Stage III were, in the author's opinion, of greatest value to the teachers. Their understanding of discourse and their knowledge of English increased enormously. However, whether the analysis of a text in terms of the communicative functions helped the students to read more effectively was somewhat doubtful, as many of the texts did not lend themselves to such an

analysis.

The exercises sometimes required the students to "find an example of a definition", just as they had been asked to find examples of the passive voice, the past tense, etc. in their old traditional textbooks. This meant that the student had to analyze the text at a sentence level only and did not consider the text as a whole. Furthermore, the students were not putting the language to use.

It is not surprising, then, that the reaction of some students to the learning of some of the communicative functions was "So what"?

This apparent indifference on the part of those students raised several questions. Could it be that it was not so useful pedagogically for the students to be cognizant of the fact that we use language for a purpose and that these purposes can be identified and classified? Or was it perhaps the **way** we were teaching the functions?

It was these questions which later led to the hypothesis that one could perhaps make the study of functions in written language more meaningful if they were shown to be related to the topic of a stretch of discourse. Such a hypothesis was put into practice with experimental materials developed for a field study in communicative language teaching carried out at ISPJAE between 1980 and

1982, and described in Chapter Five.

Another problem area was that of grammatical and phonetic correction. The same flexible type of correction that the author had experimented with in the 240-hour course in 1975-76 was attempted in this course as well. The more experienced teachers with a good grounding in English and an ability to analyze a student's errors were able to handle it, but the others could not and felt quite daunted by the procedure. It was clear that it would be difficult to institute this as a general procedure in future courses without first preparing the teachers. Such training was touched on in the Integrated Oral Practice Course, which the author gave to the English teachers in the ISPJAE Language Department in the 1979-80 academic year. (See Section 4.6.1 of Chapter Four.)

3.8 **Evaluation of the 1975 to 1977 Period**

During the two years, 1975 to 1977, the basic tenets of the communicative approach had reached important sectors of the English teaching community in Cuba. Advisers, inspectors, curriculum designers, and teachers in the field of English language teaching were made aware of the approach through courses, lectures, books, or personal contact with people familiar with or using the approach.

In general, among the practitioners of English language teaching, there was a desire to know more about the approach, the theory behind it and its possible application to the practical problems of language teaching in Cuba. There was a general consensus that the methods then in use did not meet the need to teach the language in as short a time as possible with maximum efficiency.

Perhaps most important was the feeling of hope among some that, in time, the new approach would offer solutions that could rectify the generally recognized shortcomings.

In this initial period, the dissemination of the new ideas had met no resistance. In fact, high-level officials had encouraged the efforts to communicate these ideas to selected groups of teachers at all levels of the professional scale. The adoption and putting into practice of the ideas, however, were limited to English language courses for science and technological students at a university level, and largely at the postgraduate level.

By the end of the 1976-77 academic year, a communicative approach had already been introduced into the postgraduate programmes at ISPJAE, the Higher Institute for Medical Sciences, and CNIC. The approach

had also been introduced into the regular undergraduate English courses at the University of Havana.

It was feasible for these institutes of higher learning to introduce such innovations, in large part because of their institutional autonomy from the Ministry of Education where there was resistance to the introduction of new ideas.

The secondary schools (Grades 7-12) whose General English language courses were controlled by the Ministry of Education in Havana, continued to use older methods whose results were admittedly mediocre. Curricula, syllabuses, study programmes, textbooks and teacher-training programmes were all determined in a centralized way and applied nationally. At this stage, the Ministry showed no interest in a communicative approach.

There were extenuating circumstances that made the Ministry's attitude understandable. By the mid-1970's, the audio-lingual approach had become consolidated. An entire generation of English teachers in an era of great educational growth had assimilated the approach and an enormous infrastructure that spread from one end of the island to the other had been established.

The burgeoning number of students in secondary education and the urgent need to upgrade the English teachers to an acceptable level of linguistic competence made the

National English Department of the Ministry reluctant to introduce an approach whose worth had not yet been proven.

The training of more than a thousand secondary-school English language teachers had been an undertaking requiring years of work and enormous outlays of human and material resources. Literally hundreds of thousands of English language textbooks for classroom use had been printed and distributed. A national system of inspection for English teaching, with its centre at the Ministry of Education in Havana and branches in all 14 provinces, had been set up,

The ongoing professional development courses for English teachers stressed the audio-lingual approach which, though far from ideal, served to introduce millions of young Cubans to the English language.

3.9 Proposals for the Future

While the application of a communciative approach to non-university level General English courses in Cuba presented major obstacles, its introduction into the undergraduate university English language programmes for Science and Technology was seen to be both feasible and necessary by Dr. Patrick Allen. The author and many veteran university-level Cuban English teachers concurred

with this view.

Referring to the situation at ISPJAE, Dr. Allen pointed out in the report of his March 1977 visit (1977:1) that there were 2000 undergraduate students at ISPJAE who on their arrival at the Institute "have some knowledge of general English deriving from their secondary school training, but they will still need to develop the ability to use English as a tool in pursuit of their specialist studies."

Dr. Allen proposed "a one-year course at immediate post-secondary level which will serve both to rectify the student's defective knowledge of basic English where necessary, and to provide a transition to technical English in the later stages."

He recommended that in an integrated two- or three-year undergraduate programme "the syllabus should emphasize the communicative rather than the grammatical properties of language ... A student of engineering, for example, should be made aware of the various ways in which English is used to explain, classify, to express cause and effect relationships, or to write a description, a report or a set of instructions."

Dr. Allen also made important proposals regarding the training of teachers, the coordinated production and

testing of materials within Cuba, and the establishment of links with academic institutions in other countries.

In Dr. Allen's view any project to create a new EST syllabus for Cuba had to include in-service training aimed at "changing the teachers' attitudes ... by exploring the way English is used to express certain concepts and reasoning processes which are fundamental to the study of a particular science."

In the author's opinion, Dr. Allen's concern for changing attitudes was well warranted. Five years of experience in Cuba had shown that virtually all teachers considered the teaching of English to be synonymous with the exclusive study of the language system even when the texts under study were scientific in content. Totally absent was the teaching of the relationship between language and the scientific concepts contained in the texts.

Another of Dr. Allen's recommendations was that a single coordinated effort be undertaken to produce EST materials in Cuba. He also felt that an EST Research and Development Unit should be established at a relatively high level in Havana to design materials and feed them into the various institutions for testing and modification to meet specific needs. The R&D Unit would also be responsible for establishing a local forum for discussion, and for establishing a reference library of

EST materials, both published and unpublished.

Between 1975 and 1977, the beginnings of such coordination in development and research as suggested by Dr. Allen had in fact been carried out between the postgraduate teachers at ISPJAE, Medical Sciences, and CNIC. Several ad hoc interchanges of ideas and experimental materials had taken place but there was still no systematic or formalized coordination.

While no reference library had been set up, the author's ample personal library which included books on the communicative approach was available to interested teachers.

Dr. Allen proposed that Cuba's relationship with foreign institutions in the field of English language teaching be a two-way path, with Cuba being both a provider and receiver of help.

He suggested that there could eventually be scope for adapting the materials produced by the Cuban Research and Development Unit for use in other Spanish-speaking countries, "thus providing educational leadership on an international scale".

Furthermore, he recommended that a link be established with an appropriate university department in Canada or Britain (e.g. Concordia University in Montreal, OISE in

Toronto, the Universities of London, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Lancaster, Reading.) Allen saw this as a way of allowing for a two-way relationship between what he called "a Cuban English Studies Project (CESP) and an Associated Overseas University (AOU)" in order to:

:train CESP teachers at AOU

:establish a Cuba-related EST R&D Unit at AOU

:organize consultative visits by AOU staff to CESP

:assign an ESP specialist from AOU to CESP to help with in-service teacher training and to assist in the development of an EST course

:gain access on the part of CESP to the network of relationships which already links British and Canadian universities, both to one another and to numerous EST projects around the world.

At the time that these proposals were made, there had never been any exchanges in the field of English language teaching with Canadian or British universities. Cuban engineers, doctors, veterinarians and scientists had been sent to those countries but English language teachers, perhaps because some Cuban educators considered them low on the list of priorities, had never been given the opportunity to go. In 1976, CUSO had approved a project to send two Cuban English teachers from ISPJAE to Canada for a summer course but, for reasons unknown, ISPJAE did not accept the offer.

It is understandable that Dr. Allen did not even mention the United States as a possible exchange partner. Prior to the Revolution, many English teachers from Cuba regularly visited the United States or studied there. After 1960, however, travel and study in the United States was totally suspended.

During the 1960's and early 1970's, the British Council had played a vital role in maintaining a bridge with current trends in the field of language teaching in the English-speaking world, and in particular with Britain. Once they left Cuba in 1973, the void was filled by the English teachers and specialists who came to Cuba as advisers and course planners. These included the CUSO team of English teachers from Canada (1972-1975) and Dr. Allen in 1977.

As chance would have it, after 1975 the author, who originally came with the CUSO team, was the only one to continue working with Cuban teachers as an adviser. In addition to day-to-day contact with the teachers, she had had the opportunity to gather and bring back to Cuba up-to-date information from universities in the English-speaking world.

Dr. Allen's visit marked an important moment in the 1975-1977 period. His prestige helped to legitimize and clarify the communicative approach within the English

language teaching community in Cuba.

Due in large part to his visit, the decision was taken to familiarize the undergraduate teachers at ISPJAE with the communicative approach being used in the postgraduate programme. From June 6 to July 14, 1977, a 54-hour course concentrating on the teaching of rhetorical functions found in EST was given to all the undergraduate English teachers including the head of the department.

A secondary objective of this course was to provide teachers of the 1976-77 postgraduate course with the opportunity to develop their own capacities as teacher trainers in a communicative approach. Under the supervision of the author, two of these teachers, Gisela Hernández and Mercedes Sorzano, designed and gave the course, while two other teachers, Carmen Sam and Olga Larraz, helped to lead the workshops.

While the course for the undergraduate teachers was in progress, the author submitted a major report to her superiors at ISPJAE entitled **The Need for Continuing Development in the ISPJAE English Language Project.** (See Appendix B). The report made a number of proposals which dovetailed with Dr. Allen's recommendations.

The motive for writing the report was to ensure that the innovative work of the English language project would

continue in the absence of the author who had won a research fellowship award from the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Ottawa, Canada, to do postgraduate studies at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland during the 1977-78 academic year.

The author's report, like that of Dr. Allen's, stressed the need to introduce a communicative approach into the undergraduate programme. She suggested that the books then in use "incorporate the new functional approach and ... be revised to include exercises in the rhetorical functions of scientific language ..."

A concrete proposal was made that preparatory work on the first-year materials start in September 1977 under the guidance of Mercedes Sorzano, who was prepared and eager to carry out such a task. The report projected two visits to Cuba by the author in December 1977 and April 1978, to oversee the work in progress and ensure that the materials would be completed for use in the 1978-79 academic year.

Furthermore, a plan was put forward to write a series of specialized teaching materials for the second-year undergraduate students in different fields of engineering upon the author's return to Cuba in October 1978.

In her report, the author also emphasized -- as had done Dr. Allen -- that there was an urgent need for in-service

EST teacher training. She proposed that, during her two working visits in the 1977-78 academic year, she "give seminars on specific aspects of the functional approach to EST and report on the most up-to-date research being done in Great Britain." These proposed seminars were seen by the author as a natural follow-up to the course for undergraduate teachers which was in progress at the time that the report was submitted to the English Department head and his superiors.

The author's report went on to recommend that during the 1978-79 academic year, after her return to Cuba, she give "a full teacher-training course to all the ISPJAE English teachers to include such topics as error analysis and research methods". She stressed that she would be able to "bring information on the latest developments in the field of EST."

Other points mentioned in the author's report related to the need to make ISPJAE the nationwide centre for English language for "the specialized methodology, textbook materials and teacher training in EST as applied to engineering and technological studies."

In line with Dr. Allen's recommendations, the author reaffirmed the idea that "international ties with advanced centres should be expanded and developed."

In retrospect, Dr. Allen's contribution can be considered an important step forward on a road that would still present many obstacles. That road would be one of uneven development, with some Cuban centres making more progress than others.

Beginning in the 1977-78 academic year, the Higher Institute of Medical Sciences introduced **English for Medical Science** from the **Focus** series into the undergraduate programme.

The same progress was not evident at ISPJAE, however, in spite of the desire for change demonstrated by virtually all the teachers. During the author's leave of absence in 1977-78, a conservative backlash on the part of the head of the department prevented the introduction of a new approach at ISPJAE's undergraduate level and the implementation of the recommendations of both Dr. Allen and the author.

CHAPTER FOUR

PHASE III (1978 - 1982)
THE INTRODUCTION OF THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH INTO THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME

PART 1: OVERCOMING OBSTACLES: 1978 - 1980

4.1 Introduction

In December 1976, CUJAE, Cuba's largest faculty of technology with an enrolment of 10,000 students, was removed from the jurisdiction of the University of Havana and became the Higher Polytechnic Institute José Antonio Echeverría, known henceforth as ISPJAE (Instituto Superior Politécnico José Antonio Echeverría). (1)

The change was motivated by a general growth in higher education. By 1976, enrolment at the university level in Cuba had more than tripled since 1959 and was close to 84,000. In order to better attend to the needs of the expanded system of post-secondary education, a new Ministry of Higher Education (MES - Ministerio de Educación Superior) was created.

Under the new organization, many faculties of the three existing universities became separate independent institutions of higher learning, directly responsible to the new ministry. One of these was ISPJAE.

Although ISPJAE was now the only independent higher institute for technological studies, students continued

to study Engineering and Architecture in three other university centres throughout the country. However, ISPJAE was the most important administratively; it was considered the "centro rector" which set the pedagogical pattern for the other engineering schools.

Due to the emphasis on technology resulting from Cuba's ambitious developmental plans, the percentage increase in the number of students in Engineering and Architecture nationwide was greater than that of the increase in higher education as a whole. From an enrolment of 3500 in these two fields in 1959, there had been a jump to approximately 20,000 by 1976, the majority of whom studied at ISPJAE. (2)

4.2 The Department of English at ISPJAE

Following the conversion of CUJAE into ISPJAE, changes were introduced into the organizational structure of the institute which affected all faculties and departments. One, which directly affected the English programme, was the elimination of a separate Postgraduate Department.

Under the new structure at ISPJAE, the postgraduate and undergraduate English departments were united under the person who, until then, had been chairman of only the undergraduate programme.

In March 1977, the new head of department attended all the activities organized during Dr. Allen's week-long visit to Cuba. In June-July of the same year, he attended the EST course for the undergraduate teachers at ISPJAE given by two Cuban teachers from the postgraduate programme under the supervision of the author.

While participating in these learning experiences, the head of department stated that, in his opinion, the new ideas concerning a communicative approach to language teaching were not appropriate for undergraduate students. He argued that the methodology and the English textbook then in use in the undergraduate programme -- of which he was one of the co-authors -- adequately met the linguistic needs in English of the students of engineering.

In his view, undergraduate students would be unable to grasp what he considered to be the highly complex conceptual framework of communicative functions and notions. Another of his arguments was that EST materials such as the **Focus** series, were not so much concerned with teaching English as with teaching science. This, he claimed, was not the role of an English teacher.

Only one other teacher in the department concurred with these views. Among the rest of the teachers, there were many who also found it difficult to do the exercises in

the **Focus** books, but they were nonetheless enthusiastic about analyzing and teaching scientific texts from a discoursal point of view. They posited that this kind of analysis helped them -- and therefore would help the student -- to a better understanding of the content of a text because it revealed more clearly the interrelationship between language and thought. They attributed their own difficulties to the fact that their academic backgrounds were in the Arts rather than the Sciences, i.e. that they were not as familiar with the field of knowledge that the language was expressing. It was just a question of time and practice, they felt, before they would master the new concepts and be able to apply them to scientific texts.

4.3 Years of Conflict

The objections raised concerning a discoursal approach to the teaching of reading to undergraduate engineering students presaged what was to become a period of great tension at ISPJAE as desire for change grew and attempts were made to meet this demand.

The opposition took various forms: failure to act on recommendations and proposals, even in cases where these had been agreed upon; casting doubt on the effectiveness as well as the ideological soundness of the new ideas; minimizing the need for foreign technical assistance and

even trying to eliminate altogether that assistance. These tactics are outlined below in a chronological description of the events which took place between July 1977 and January 1980.

At the end of July 1977, the author began her sixteen-month leave of absence to study in Great Britain. Despite her absence, she officially remained adviser to the English programmes at ISPJAE, and made two working visits to Cuba during the academic year.

After the author's departure, none of the recommendations made by Dr. Allen or herself concerning the introduction of the new approach into the undergraduate programme were put into practice. (See Appendix B for these recommendations.)

Work did not begin on changes to the first-year materials in September 1977, and so during the author's two working visits in December 1977 and April 1978, her activities were perforce restricted to helping with the ongoing experimental work in the postgraduate division. In addition, the proposal to hold seminars during those visits on current work in Great Britain in the fields of Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching was simply ignored.

The Research Associate Award, granted to the author by

the International Development Research Council of Canada (IDRC) for study overseas, committed her to return to Cuba to continue her work there on the use of a communicative approach for licensed engineers and engineering students. This plan had been approved by the Rector of ISPJAE. Despite this, the continued opposition to change was evident when the author returned to ISPJAE in December 1978 following completion of her research abroad.

She was relegated to a job that limited her influence solely to the postgraduate programme where -- for two reasons -- this could have no lasting effect. Firstly, the programme had been drastically reduced to two groups and was slated to disappear within two years as all available English teachers were needed in the expanding undergraduate programme. Secondly, the two postgraduate teachers who had been made the adviser's sole counterparts were both women close to retirement age who had never trained other teachers and, in view of the new plans to phase out the postgraduate programme, would never do so. Thus, any innovative work which the author might initiate within her new tasks would never be passed on.

A further indication of the determination to block the spread of new ideas was a refusal to authorize the holding of any courses, seminars, or even book displays

at ISPJAE in order to inform the ISPJAE teachers, as well as teachers from other centres, of the research and publications in their field in the English-speaking world.

Under these conditions, Dr. Allen's suggestion of establishing links with overseas contacts could not be implemented.

This negative attitude had repercussions beyond ISPJAE when the head of the ISPJAE English department was appointed chairman of the newly-established National Sub-Commission for English Language Teaching in late 1978. This position, which he held simultaneously with his job as head of the Language Department at ISPJAE until January 1980, brought him into contact with representatives from the major higher-level teaching institutions in the country.

It is sadly ironic that when a degree of coordination and national leadership was finally established -- both of which had been recommended by Dr. Allen in his proposal for a high-level Research and Development Unit in Cuba -- it was not used to disseminate and encourage new ideas.(3)

4.4 Encouragement for the New Ideas from Outside ISPJAE

4.4.1 Book Writing Project at Medical Sciences

The attitude of the head of the Language Department at the medical school in Havana (ISCM-H) contrasted sharply with that of her homologue at ISPJAE. In January 1979, one month after her return from Great Britain, the author was invited to give a two-week intensive course at the medical school to provide the teachers in the English Department there with more background in discourse analysis and to up-date their information on the development and use of the communicative approach in Great Britain. This course was given in collaboration with Professor Marjorie Moore. (4)

When the course finished, a team of teachers at ISCM-H was chosen to produce a new series of textbooks to be used nationally for the teaching of reading to all first- and second-year medical students. In the ensuing ten months, four textbooks -- based on a functional-notional syllabus -- were written. They were tested in the classroom in the early part of 1980 before final printing for the 1980-81 academic year. (5)

The author and Professor Moore consulted each other frequently during this entire period of expanding use of the communicative approach in both the undergraduate and

postgraduate English programmes at Medical Sciences. The collaboration, however, was never encouraged by the ISPJAE Language Dept. head who tacitly refused to give offical sanction to the idea of the "coordinated effort in the field of EST materials production" which Dr. Allen recommended in his final report (1977:7).

It is important to point out that the use of a communicative approach in the English programmes at Medical Sciences in Havana was a major breakthrough since all medical schools in Cuba, with an enrolment of almost 4000 students at that time, followed suit.

4.4.2 **Seminar at National Centre for Scientific Research**

In November 1979, one year after her return from Britain, the author was invited by the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNIC) to conduct a half-day seminar on the communicative approach for over 100 English teachers, methodologists, and course designers representing the major English departments and higher decision-making bodies in the country.

The seminar, organized by Professor Ana Maria Hermosilla of CNIC (6), had a three-part format:

:A one-hour lecture on the communciative approach given by the author, followed by a 20-30 minute discussion period with the participants in the

seminar;

:A 40 minute break during which time the participants could look over a display of over 75 books which the author had brought back from Great Britain and Canada and which were available for borrowing;

:A Round Table discussion among six teachers from the Higher Institute of Medical Sciences who were in the final stages of writing the new series of textbooks, using a communicative approach, for use in their undergraduate programme.

The discussion from the floor following the author's one-hour lecture demonstrated that there was keen interest and enthusiasm for the new ideas. Following the lecture, the participants perused the books and in many cases borrowed them for further consultation.

The Round Table discussion followed. Six of the teachers taking part in this were members of the textbook-writing team at Medical Sciences. Four of them, including the new head of the English Department, were Cuban; one, Marjorie Moore, was a U.S. citizen; the sixth, Suzanne Daoust, was a bilingual French-Canadian. (7)

Prior to the seminar, the author had met with the Round

Table participants to explore the themes that would be touched on in the discussion. There was consensus that the Round Table would be an excellent way to round off the seminar since, among other points of interest, it would highlight how the new ideas were actually being put into practice for university students at an undergraduate level.

The scene was therefore set for a discussion that would apparently support the use of the new approach. To the surprise of the author and others, the Round Table took a totally unforeseen turn.

The first speaker, the relatively new head of the medical school's English department, cast doubts upon the approach. Her arguments were two-fold. First, she told the assembled seminar participants that, although the approach seemed to be very interesting, it needed to be analyzed carefully to ensure that its methodology did not run counter to the prevailing Marxist-Leninist principles as applied to the teaching of language. Secondly, she stated that it was premature for the textbook-writing team to say anything definitive about the efficacy of the approach.

The seminar ended with the two foreign members of the textbook-writing team on the podium pitted against their Cuban colleagues, trying to cope with the unexpected

situation. It was the first time that the approach they had been using in both their postgraduate and undergraduate courses for over three years and which had been adopted for the textbook-writing project (then into its eighth month) had been called into question on either of these issues.

The clash in open forum where both sides could put forth their points of view was extremely healthy inasmuch as it precipitated a battle of ideas. And in the end, the day's events had little effect on halting the process of developing the new ideas in already existing programmes or of thwarting their adoption in other programmes.

4.4.2.1 **Aftermath to the CNIC Seminar**

Work on the series of textbooks at the medical school continued normally as if nothing had happened. The series, completed shortly after the CNIC seminar, was tested in the classroom in the first months of 1980, and was adopted for use in classes beginning in the 1980-81 academic year.

The seminar also served to stimulate interest in new quarters. Only days after it ended, the author was invited to give a lecture on the new trends in language teaching at the Annual National Seminar for English Methodologists of the Language Schools. This seminar,

given to all the methodologists who were responsible for approximately 100 language schools operating under the Ministry of Education throughout Cuba, was held in January 1980. (8)

The National Seminar led to a demand for even more information about the new approach. The author gave further lectures in March and April of 1980 to methodologists and teachers at the provincial and municipal levels of the Language School system of the Province of Havana.

4.5 Overcoming the Opposition at ISPJAE

At ISPJAE, despite opposition from the department head, a state of inconformity with the prevailing methods used in the undergraduate English language division began to take on the dimensions of a minor revolt. Most of the teachers, including the main author of the textbook being used in that programme, supported the idea of change.

There was a generalized belief, based on experience, that the traditional approach, which concentrated only on the teaching of grammatical structures and vocabulary, and which used a translation method for testing the comprehension of scientific texts was inadequate. Teachers complained that many students showed little interest, were restless in class and made a habit of

simply copying someone else's translation.

The challenge to the department head's leadership clashed with his need to assert authority, and brought things to a head in mid-July 1979, some eight months after the author's return from Great Britain.

The crisis began when the author was unexpectedly informed that her contract as English Language Adviser would not be renewed when it expired at the end of the month because of budgetary problems at the Institute. The reason was hardly credible in view of the fact that the author, who had come to Cuba as a CUSO co-operant, was still receiving the 1972 monthly salary of 300 Cuban pesos (350 dollars U.S), less than most of her Cuban colleagues in the department.

News of the termination of the author's contract brought about a round of protest from teachers within the ISPJAE English Department and from her former postgraduate engineering students, many of whom occupied important administrative positions such as deans and vice-deans at the Institute.

The attempt, to what amounted to dismissal of the adviser, backfired. Several days after the tempest began, the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs at ISPJAE called the author to a meeting with himself and the head of the English department. At that meeting, the Vice-Rector

informed the author that her contract was being renewed and that in the coming academic year he wished her to carry out two major tasks.

The first was to teach two professional development courses to the English teachers in the Department, one in writing skills and one in integrated oral practice. This request was fully backed by the head of department who appeared to have proposed the idea, even suggesting the title of the two courses. It was clearly stated by both the Vice-Rector and department head that the author would be designer and teacher of the courses with sole responsibility for the focus, methodology and choice of teaching materials.

The second task requested by the Vice-Rector was to carry out a controlled experiment with four matched groups of first-year students to determine the relative merits of the traditional and communicative approaches. The Vice-Rector emphasized the importance of this experiment in determining the future direction of English language teaching at the Institute.

The renewal of the author's contract and the request for such a controlled matched-group experiment constituted a blow to the attempts to prevent the introduction of a more adequate and scientific approach to the teaching of English at ISPJAE and other institutes of higher learning

throughout the country. It did not, however, put an end to such attempts.

4.6 The Controlled Experiment Requested for 1979-80

In accordance with the Vice-Rector's request, the controlled matched-group experiment was ready to be undertaken at the beginning of the 1979-80 academic year.

The experiment was to be carried out with four matched groups of first-year students. Two of the groups were to constitute the experimental groups using a comunicative approach in their study of English and the other two were to be used as control groups studying with a traditional approach.

It was understood that the decision of whether or not to eventually introduce a communicative approach in the undergraduate division would, in part at least, depend on the results of the controlled experiment.

With only one month to design and prepare the experiment, original materials were precluded. The author thus decided to use the regular first-year textbook, **Technical English I**, in use in the undergraduate programme since 1966, for the two control groups, and **General Science** of the **Nucleus** series for the two experimental groups.

In line with one of the principles of an ESP

communicative approach, the author (who was to teach the experimental groups) also planned to include authentic texts and specially prepared materials tailored to the needs and abilities of her students. These would be developed as the course progressed.

A week before the beginning of term, the department head asserted his authority to frustrate the experiment by announcing that there were problems that needed to be sorted out before the experiment could be undertaken. The problems were never defined, and the experiment was held in limbo until well after the academic course had begun. By that time it was too late to match groups of students by means of a proficiency test.

Thus it was that the controlled experiment which the Vice Rector had requested for the 1979-80 academic year and which the head of department had in principle agreed to was never carried out.

4.7 Professional Development Courses at ISPJAE

Even with the experiment now aborted, the author was able to continue her work of elucidating the communicative approach in the two professional development courses concerned with writing and oral practice.

One might ask why the controlled experiment was sabotaged

while the professional development courses were allowed to go forward.

One assumption is that no good reasons could be found for cancelling the courses that the Vice-Rector had requested and that the teachers were looking forward to.

A more likely explanation, in the author's opinion, is that, because of his own inexperience with the current theory and practice in English language teaching, the head of department was unaware of the fact that seemingly traditional courses entitled "Writing" and "Integrated Oral Practice" could be designed to inform the teachers about current trends and to have them put into practice new concepts and methodology. When he did become aware of this fact, the Integrated Oral Practice course was already well underway.

These two professional development courses served as vehicles for introducing the English teachers at ISPJAE to new ideas and methodologies, and for answering the attacks made on the approach. They also helped pave the way for an experimental field study which was carried out in the Language Department at ISPJAE between September 1980 and June 1982.

Because of their importance in a process which culminated in the adoption of a communicative approach to the

teaching of English in the undergraduate programme for engineering students, a brief description of their objectives, content, and methodology is given in this section.

4.7.1 Integrated Oral Practice Course

The 90-hour Integrated Oral Practice course extended over a six-month period beginning in October 1979. Its objectives were the following:

:to give the students intensive oral practice in English while increasing their understanding of the communicative aspects of the language

:to improve the students' knowledge of English grammar and phonetics

:to prepare the students to be able to teach the techniques of listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and note-taking

Except for an introductory lecture to the course given by the author, all the classes were held as workshops in which the 'students' (i.e. English teachers) themselves participated in doing exercises and making presentations aimed at enhancing and sharing their knowledge and abilities.

No Spanish was permitted in any of the sessions. This

afforded the teachers an infrequent opportunity to speak and listen to English at all times over a period of many months. Some, who at first had difficulty understanding and expressing their ideas in English, had qualitatively improved by the end of the course.

Grammatical and phonetic problems were dealt with on an ad hoc basis -- such as had been experimented with in courses for postgraduate engineers and described in Chapter Three -- with the author emphasizing those areas where the teachers showed greatest weakness. The type of explanations, which whenever possible were elicited from the teachers themselves, aimed to increase understanding of a semantic approach to the teaching of Grammar and Phonetics. The teachers were constantly referred to the Quirk and Leech & Svartvik grammars in order to increase their knowledge of this new approach to grammar.

It was the author's belief that the best way to achieve the goal of preparing the teachers to be able to teach the techniques of listening and reading comprehension as well as note-taking was to have them practice these very things in the classroom. By developing these skills in practice, they would acquire the necessary basis for passing them on to others.

The basic text used for practising study skills was J.B. Heaton's **Studying in English.** The book proved to be of

vital importance since the majority of the teachers did not know how to take notes and make summaries in a systematic way.

Besides the aural practice derived from the Listening Comprehension practice in Heaton, the course also included programmes from the BBC Open University such as David Crystal's **The Sounds of English** and Harrison and Walker's **Reading After Ten.**

To give the teachers additional background in the theory underlying the communicative approach, excerpts from books published in the 1970's were used for reading comprehension and oral discussion: Gillian Brown, **Listening to Spoken English;** Criper and Widdowson, **Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching;** Frank Palmer, **Grammar;** and Widdowson, **Teaching Language as Communication.**

An important aspect of the course, constituting 25% of the final mark, was the activity of oral presentations. (Again, this was an activity which had been successfully used in postgraduate courses, not only at ISPJAE, but also at CNIC and at the medical school in Havana.)

Each participant teacher was required to make a twenty-minute oral presentation, followed by discussion, on a topic related to English teaching. Current issues of the

Modern English Teacher were made available to the teachers so that they could select topics to talk about which would be of discussion-provoking interest to their colleagues.

The course was broken down into fifteen six-hour units made up of activities related to reading, listening, study skills, and oral practice.

Unit VII, an example of a typical unit, was organized as follows:

:Note-taking Exercise based on Listening Comprehension - Topic: **Skimming**

:Silent Reading on Note-taking Techniques: **Relationships between Ideas.** Group discussion

:Oral Presentation by Participating Teacher on **Simulation.** Group Discussion

:Silent Reading and Discussion of article on **The SQ3R Method**

:Explanations of Grammar and Phonetics related to the "students'" problems in these areas. These were detected and noted down by the course professor during the various activities of the unit

4.7.2 **Writing Course**

The major benefit of this 50-hour writing course, which began in November 1979, was that it made clear, in practice, that the communicative approach is an **approach** and not a **method.** It demonstrated to the teachers that old textbooks could be made new simply by changing the methodological approach to the exercises.

Two books formed the basis for the course: Imhoof and Hudson's **From Paragraph to Essay** and **Discovering Discourse** from the Moore and Widdowson (eds.) series, **Reading and Thinking in English.**

For the main assignment, on which the final evaluation of the writing course was based, each teacher selected one chapter from **Techical English I or II**, the textbooks that they were using to teach English to first- and second-year engineering students. They then reworked the teaching of the reading passage by writing new exercises which incorporated a communicative, or discoursal, approach.

The reading passages in these books had been originally chosen by the Cuban authors not only for the subject matter but mainly to illustrate a particular set of grammatical teaching points, such as the simple present tense, noun modification, etc.

The grammatical emphasis of the first-year textbook can be easily discerned by perusing its table of contents. The first three chapters suffice to illustrate this:

Chapter I:
- **The Present Tense: Simple and Progressive**
- Prepositions: OF - WITH
- Cognates, Semi-Cognates, and False Cognates
- Reading Selection: **Electronics**

Chapter II:
- **The Past Tense: Simple and Progressive**
- Irregular Verbs
- Prefix: DIS-
- Reading Selection: **Galileo and Pendulums**

Chapter III:
- **The Future Tense**
- Prepositions: AGAINST - ALONG
- Suffix: -WARD
- Reading Selection: **Gravitation**

The challenge for the author was to teach her "students" how to take the markedly grammatical approach used in the exercises of the first- and second-year textbooks and convert it into a communicative approach.

Prior to developing their own materials for the readings of the first- and second-year textbooks, the teachers worked through the exercises for reading passages in **Discovering Discourse.** In this book, two types of exercises are developed: one set concerned with the purely linguistic aspects of the text (language study questions) and the other related to understanding the ideas in the text (comprehension questions).

The teachers, who had used textbooks that confused the two types of questions, learned to distinguish between

them. In the process, they became aware of the importance of lucid communication and the meaning of a text as discourse as opposed to the meaning of individual sentences.

The assignment of rewriting the exercises for the reading passages in the first- and second-year textbooks generated enthusiasm on the part of the teachers as they discovered that it was possible to deal with the analysis of a reading passage in a new way that would be more motivating for the student. It made the reading passages more interesting and comprehensible, even to the teachers themselves who, in some cases, had worked with the same materials for years and had never understood the key ideas of certain texts.

The fifty-hour writing course was of direct relevance to the field study that was later carried out between 1980 and 1982. Many of the teachers who took the course participated in the teaching aspect of the field study which incorporated materials they had personally developed during the course. (See Appendix D for the final version of the exercises used in the 1980-82 field study.)

4.8 The End of Opposition

Throughout the first semester of the 1979-80 academic

year, the tensions in the English department between the teachers and the department head continued to grow. There was discontentment that the controlled matched-group experiment had not been carried out. And when the author was requested to step in and solve a teacher shortage in second year by teaching two groups of students, the other teachers saw this as time taken away from their professional development under her guidance.

The author tried to maintain discrete and proper relations with her superior, but the underlying hostilities finally erupted when she was asked, somewhat forcibly, to sign a paper stating that she had failed to fulfill her monthly work plan.

The author felt obliged to report this harassment to the Vice-Rector of International Relations while at the same time suggesting that, under the circumsatances, it might be better if she resigned. This turn of events led to a full-scale investigation of the situation in the Language Department as a whole, resulting in the removal of the head of department from his post in January 1980. The appointment of the assistant head as the new head of department finally opened the way for change and experimentation.

Two former post-graduate teachers, Gisela Hernández (9) and Carmen Sam, inititated a limited experiment in the

second semester of the 1979-80 academic year (beginning in March 1980.) It consisted of introducing several new exercises into each unit of the first-year texbook to make students aware of the discourse features of reference and logical connection. The student response was favourable and the teachers expressed a desire to see more profound changes.

Thus it was that, by June 1980, conditions were ripe to carry out an experimental field study. Not only was there interest and readiness on the part of the ISPJAE teachers but there was also an urgent need related to the writing of two new textbooks for second-year engineering and architecture students throughout the country.

The National Subcommission for English had appointed two English teachers from ISPJAE, Mercedes Sorzano and Alice Felix, to undertake the writing of these textbooks over a two-year period. They were to begin preliminary bibliographic research on the task in January 1981 with the actual writing beginning in January 1982. The field study was to help determine the approach to use.

The atmosphere in the department had completely changed. When the author was approached by the new head of department in June 1980 to prepare a field study for the coming academic year, she was assured that no obstacles would be put in the way of carrying it out.

CHAPTER FIVE

PHASE III:

THE INTRODUCTION OF A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH INTO THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME AT ISPJAE

PART 2: EXPERIMENTAL FIELD STUDY: 1980-1982

5.1 Introduction

An experimental field study which included a controlled matched-group experiment was carried out at ISPJAE under the direction of the author between 1980 and 1982. The general objective was to determine the relative efficacy of two methodological approaches to the teaching of reading comprehension in English to first-year undergraduate students of Engineering and Architecture.

The specific objective was to compare the traditional grammatical-lexical approach, which had been used in English language courses for engineering students since the 1960's, with a new communicative approach in order to influence the way English would be taught in the latter part of the 1980's at all of Cuba's engineering schools. If the new approach was shown to be superior it would determine the approach and content of new textbooks for second-year engineering students which were to be written by two teachers at ISPJAE, commissioned by the National Sub-Commission for the Teaching of English.

5.2 Design and Organization of the Field Study

A controlled matched-group experiment was the original design for the field study carried out during the academic courses of 1980-81 and 1981-82. This experiment was to involve 12 groups of students at ISPJAE: six were to be experimental groups matched with six control groups at the same institution.

The design, however, became more complicated once the first materials were produced, necessitating the use of control groups at another university. This unexpected turn of events is explained below.

Both the experimental and control groups were to use the textbook **Technical English I**. No revisions or changes to the basic content of the syllabus was to made for any of the groups. The experimental groups, however, would be taught by means of an experimental methodology which consisted of specially written exercises for the study of both the grammatical teaching items and the reading passages which made up each of the 16 chapters, or units, in the book.

There were professional, experimental and practical reasons for choosing **Technical English I** as the textbook for both the experimental and control groups.

The writing course given to the teachers during the 1979-

80 academic year (see Chapter IV, Section 4.7.2) had shown that it was possible to rework the exercises for the reading passages in this book with a different methodology without changing the sequence of units or the actual texts. The teachers had found this stimulating and it had even prompted two of the first-year teachers to experiment during the second semester of the 1979-80 year with the introduction of additional exercises on reference and logical connection into some of the units. In view of this interest, it was concluded that it would be professionally beneficial to the teachers to continue work on the development of a complete set of coherent experimental exercises that could be used in place of the existing set in the textbook.

From an experimental point of view, the use of the same textbook for both the experimental and control groups would preclude any differences in results being due to a different syllabus and its corresponding set of texts. Exactly the same syllabus and the same set of texts, or reading passages, would be followed by all groups; the only difference would lie in **how** they were handled, i.e. the methodology used to teach them.

There was also a practical consideration of considerable importance in any developing country and particularly in Cuba. Literally thousands of copies of **Technical English I** were available, so it would not be necessary to buy or

photocopy other books thus avoiding the use of valuable foreign currency and resources. Only the experimental materials would have to be mimeographed on separate sheets of paper. Although even this would present many difficulties, these could be more easily surmounted.

The experimental teaching materials for the first two units were completed by the middle of July 1980; it was at this point that a totally unforeseen turn of events brought about a change in the design. The department head looked over the new materials and decided that **all** first-year English students in Engineering and Architecture at ISPJAE should use them beginning in September. On the one hand, this represented something of a victory for the new methodological approach, but on the other hand it destroyed the design of the research project: what were we to do about control groups?

The decisison to use the experimental materials with not six, but rather all 48 groups of first-year students at ISPJAE studying English (a total of some 1600 students), meant that control groups could not be used from among the student population at ISPJAE; they would have to be found at **another** university. Furthermore, it would be impossible to organize such a change in the six weeks left before the beginning of the new academic year.

The final design was as follows:

All 48 groups of first-year students studying English at ISPJAE used experimental materials over a two year period: in both the 1980-81 and 1981-82 academic courses.

The controlled matched-group experiment was still carried out but was postponed until the second year, 1981-82.

By June 1981 it had been possible to work out an agreement with the English Department at the Central University of Las Villas province, 250 miles from Havana, to use six of their groups of first-year engineering and architecture students as control groups. It was feasible to use control groups at another university as all Cuban engineering students throughout the country had the same kind of academic background and used the same textbook, **Technical English I**, in their first-year university studies of English.

The basic problem confronting the research team at this point was that of matching between the two universities: matching the students and matching the teachers.

The first step in the process was to select six control groups in Las Villas on the basis of the **experience of the teacher** to whom they had been allocated for the forthcoming academic year. The criterion was to choose groups whose teachers had had at least four years of classroom experience. The reasoning behind this was that the ISPJAE teachers in the undergraduate programme had

had the advantage of receiving courses and constant methodological training in new methods and techniques over the 1979-1981 period. If new, inexperienced teachers at Las Villas participated in the experiment, they would be at a disadvantage and this could skew the results.

Thus it was that the six groups from Las Villas came from the following faculties: Architecture (1); Sugar (1); Machine Construction (2); Electronics (1); Chemistry (1).

To match these six groups in Las Villas with six groups in Havana, the following procedure was followed.

In the week prior to the beginning of the 1981-82 course, a proficiency test which had been devised by the members of the research team was administered to these six groups of Las Villas students and at the same time to all the groups in all the faculties in Havana where English was taught: Architecture, Sugar, Electronics, Machine Construction, Chemistry, Energy, and Civil Engineering.

Based on the results of the proficiency test, six groups in Havana were matched with the Las Villas groups according to the mean and standard deviation of the groups' results. As will be seen, it was possible to match the Las Villas groups with groups in the corresponding faculty in Havana. (See Appendix C for the raw scores of the Las Villas and Havana groups.)

A post-test was given at the end of course in June 1982: the same proficiency test was once again administered to the control and experimental groups, and the results were compared using a t-test to determine any significant difference. Details of the results and a full discussion of their implications is given in Chapter VI, Section 6.2. (Please see pages 255 - 262.)

The matched-group experiment, it must be remembered, was only part of a larger field study at ISPJAE, involving all 1600 first-year students and the 19 teachers who gave them classes. Thus, in addition to evaluating the experimental materials by comparing the achievement of matched groups of students on pre- and post-tests, it was also possible to gather the opinions of both the students and teachers as to the effectiveness of the materials.

Furthermore, **comparative evaluations** through these surveys were possible for reasons outlined below.

Technical English I had been the offical textbook for the teaching of English to first-year engineering and architecture students throughout the country since 1966; therefore, any teachers who had taught in the first-year programme at any time during the previous 14 years would have had experience with the "traditional" methodology and could therefore make a comparative evaluation of the

two methodologies used with the same textbook. Ten of the 19 first-year teachers were in a position to do this, and of these ten, nine had used the traditional materials for more than two years.

A large-scale comparative evaluation of teaching methods and materials made by the students was also possible because a survey had been administered to the 1979-80 class of English students in December 1979 at the end of the first semester. Credit for this survey goes to a single English teacher in the department, Cesar Olazabal, who had administered a questionnaire to all first-year engineering students soliciting their opinions about such aspects as the importance of English to a future engineer and how they evaluated the present course in terms of the quality of teaching and the methodology used.

Taking advantage of this existing data, the same questionnaire was administered to the first-year students in December 1980 and again in December 1981. This permitted a comparison of the evaluations made by three different groups of students at the same moment of their studies during three consecutive years, bearing in mind that the traditional materials had been used in the 1979-80 academic year, while experimental materials had been used in 1980-81 and 1981-82. (See Appendix C for the proficiency test and the surveys that were applied to the teachers and students.)

By way of preparation for the 1981-82 academic year which involved the matched-group experiment and the final evaluation of the field study, the author gave a 48-hour course in **Basic Research Techniques** to all the ISPJAE English teachers in June 1981. The basic textbooks for this course were Vol. IV, **Testing and Experimental Methods**, of the **Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics**, Heaton's **Writing English Language Tests**, and Robson's **Experiment, Design, and Statistics in Psychology**.

The aim of the course was to train the teachers to design, carry out, analyze and interpret the results of the proficiency test and the surveys administered to the teachers and students.

5.3 Content of the Teaching Materials

As outlined above, the first-year textbook **Technical English I** was the source of both the **experimental** and **control** materials for experimental and practical reasons. In addiition, the development of new exercises and explanations for the teaching items in an already existing textbook would further the professional development of the teachers.

All nineteen first-year ISPJAE English teachers actively participated in the preparation, teaching, and evaluation

of the experimental materials over this two-year period. In addition, five teachers from the second year were part of the research team, with their participation limited to the evaluative aspect of the field study. All twenty-four of these teachers had taken the author's Integrated Oral Practice and Writing courses during the previous academic year.

The exercises that had been prepared by the teachers for the readings in **Technical English I** during the writing course formed only one part of the new materials to be used in the field study. In addition, exercises for the grammatical aspects were needed, as well as notes for teachers and students. Therefore, once it had been decided in June 1980 to carry out the field study in the coming acacdemic year, intensive work began on complete sets of materials for each unit with the teachers working in teams. By September, only three of the eight first-semester units had been completed. This made it necessary to continue the preparation of the materials as well as the methodological guidance of the teachers once the course was underway. The author and her direct counterpart, the First Year Course Director (1), assumed the ultimate responsibility for both.

In the 1980-81 course, the experimental materials were written, tested in the classroom, and revised in accordance with an ongoing assessment and recommendations

made by the members of the research team. This was done in a very systematic and comprehensive way.

While the course was in progress, the author and the Course Director made regular visits to classes to observe the degree of efficacy in the use of the materials and to detect any problem areas. In addition, the teachers met every two weeks for a full day to work through the materials to be used in class over the next two weeks and to evaluate the exercises presented in class during the previous two weeks. By the end of the 1980-81 course, after careful analysis and evaluation, all the experimental materials had been revised and improved in preparation for the following academic year.

During the 1981-82 course, the improved experimental materials were again used with all 1600 first-year students (48 groups) at ISPJAE. (2) This included the six groups which were now matched with six groups of students at the Central University of Las Villas as part of the matched-group experiment.

The experimental materials included:

:visual aids in the form of charts for the presentation of teaching items (communicative functions, grammar, etc.). It was necessary to limit ourselves to charts as there were no slide or

overhead projectors.

:exercises for the practice and reinforcement of all teaching items in a unit (reading skills, grammar, communicative functions, etc.).

:detailed suggestions (written in English) for the teacher on the possible methodological procedures to follow in presenting and developing each teaching item in each class, as well as explanations about the linguistic theory behind these suggestions. These provided a very concrete explanation of the way the approach and its methodology could be applied.

:study notes (written in Spanish) for the student which compared the rules of English and Spanish grammar and discourse and were a condensed version of the class notes for the teacher.

Although the use of Spanish in the student notes was at variance with the generally-accepted practice of using only the target language in the teaching of English, it did coincide with Dr. Allen's recommendation (1977:5):

> "In writing an English course for students of science and technology, ... we will look for opportunities to control the learning process by simple explanations in English or Spanish."

(See Appendix E for a complete set of the experimental

materials developed for one unit of the course: Unit V.)

5.3.1 **The Expanded Syllabus**

The syllabus and lesson outlines which had already been established and approved at a ministerial level were adhered to. Nothing was **removed** from the syllabus. However, because of a change in the methodology (for example the use of charts to teach grammatical items), it was possible to save time formerly spent on the teaching of the same items. This allowed for the **addition**, or insertion, into the syllabus of items referring to communicative functions and study skills. Thus, there was in effect an **expanded** syllabus.

Howatt (1984:277) has observed that the switch of attention from teaching the language system to teaching the language as communication highlighted a potentially difficult problem in organizing syllabuses, materials, and other forms of classroom activity.

Some might assume that the problem raised by Howatt did not apply to the Cuban field study because the same core syllabus was being followed for both the control and experimental groups. However, while it is true that there was no problem in the organization of the core syllabus because it was already established, there was a problem in how to organize the new items within the

"expanded" syllabus.

On the following five pages appears the expanded syllabus for Semester I of First Year. It shows the official syllabus drawn from Chapters 1 -8 of the textbook **Technical English I** plus the extra items constituting the "experimental" aspect of the materials. These items are indicated in dark print and indented.

An attempt was made to make the progression of the inserted items logical, integrated, coherent, and cyclical. This aspect will be discussed in greater detail in the sections following the outline of the expanded syllabus.

Lesson Items (New Items are Indented and Highlighted)

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE SUBJECT

- Objectives, Course Content, Approach
- Generalities: Textbook, Class notes
- Methodology & Evaluation system

-Introduction to reading skills
- Concept of levels of language and the complexity of understanding texts
- Extraction of the key information in a text through recognition of its thematic structure

UNIT I - PRESENT TENSES - SIMPLE AND PROGRESSIVE

- Cognates and False Cognates

-Noun and Adjective Endings

- Adjectives
- Prepositions: 'of' and 'with'

2 - Words used as nouns and verbs

-Reference

- Reading: ELECTRONICS

- Introduction to the analysis of readings
- Recognition of sentences and paragaphs
- Notion of topics and sub-topics in a reading passage
- Relationship of topics to paragraphs (not necessarily 1:1)
- Identification of the topics of the reading ELECTRONICS (topics are given and in the correct order; students are told which words to look for in order to be able to identify topics without reading every word)

3 **- Notion of capability and how it is expressed linguistically**
- Description of an object (i.e. an electron) according to its properties
- Some notions according to which objects are described: size, weight, length, strength, thickness, shape, charge; some of the adjectives which are used to express these notions

UNIT II - SIMPLE AND PROGRESSIVE PAST TENSE IN THE ACTIVE VOICE

- Regular and irregular forms of the simple past tense
- Spelling rules for regular forms

4 - Main irregular verbs
- Nouns as modifiers of other nouns
- Prefix: 'dis-'

-Logical Connectors

- Reading: GALILEO AND PENDULUMS

- Identifiation of topics and sub-topics of GALILEO (topics given, and in correct order; oral discussion in Spanish to predict which elements or "markers" might indicate topics)

- Explanation of "markers" of a topic

5 **- Review of material in Units I & II**

6 UNIT III - SIMPLE AND PROGRESSIVE FUTURE TENSES IN THE ACTIVE VOICE

- '-ing' verb form as noun modifier
- Class Test 1 (1 hour)

7 - Prepositions: 'against' and 'along'
- Suffix: '-ward'
- Reading: GRAVITATION

- Finding the one main topic of the reading (topic given)

8 **- Generalization and its "markers" (i.e. grammatical tense & the article)**
- Levels of generality
- Cause and effect relationships and their markers
- Difference between cause and effect relationships and time relationships

9 UNIT IV - SIMPLE TENSES IN THE PASSIVE VOICE

- Passive Voice: present, past, future
- Past participle as noun modifier
- Prepositions: 'by' and 'beside'

-Impersonal 'it'

10 - Reading: GLASS

-Identification of topics (topics are given in correct order; there is a prior discussion about what kind of elements or "markers" might be significant in identifying topics.)
- Historical description and its markers (i.e. verb tense; words and expressions indicating chronological order)
- Process description and its markers (i.e. verb tense and voice; words and expressions indicating chronological order)
- Reading in different ways according to the type of information the reader needs: skimming; scanning; search reading; detailed reading.

11 - Making a summary (in point form) of the essential information of a topic
- Converting a point-form written or oral summary into a paragraph
- Verbs expressing cause and effect

12 - Review of logical connectors

- Class Test 2 (1 hour)

13 UNIT V - MODIFIERS OF THE NOUN

- Different modifiers of the noun: adjectives, nouns, verb forms, phrases, clauses

- Essential words in a text: nouns, verbs, and modifiers
- Essential words are the information-carrying words
- Nouns, verbs, and modifiers belong to families of words
- Strings of modifiers in English where phrases and clauses are replaced by participles
- Comparison with Spanish to show that short-form modification is usually impossible in Spanish
- Decoding strings of modifiers in English

- Prepositions: 'from', 'to', 'for', 'into'

14 - Review of difficulties in Test 2
- Suffix: '-able'

- Notion of the possibility of doing something (it is possible to ...) and the linguistic forms used to express this, including the suffix '-able'

- Reading: PLASTICS

- Identification by students of topics (topics given, but not in their correct order)
- Identification by students of the topic which has sub-topics and giving an appropriate title for each sub-topic
- Writing paragraphs from summaries

15 - Classification and its relationship

to description (i.e. things are classified according to some common characteristic)
- Linguistic forms used to show division into classes

16 UNIT VI - COMPARISONS

- Review of classification showing division into classes
- Classification showing membership in a class
- Levels of generality as expressed in classification

- Comparatives and Superlatives

- Comparison of statements in terms of their level of generality
- Comparative expressions showing a proportional relationship (e.g. the more ... the more)

17 - Expressions of equality and difference

- Making a description by using either 'be' and an adjective or 'have' and a noun

- Mathematical symbols which express equality or difference
- Adverbs

18 Reading: DENSITY

- Identification of topics (topics given but not in correct order)
- Taking notes in point form (e.g. reducing a topic sentence to the key words)

19 UNIT VII - IMPERATIVES

- Imperative sentences: affirmative and negative
- No 1:1 relationship between semantic content and grammatical form (e.g. different ways of expressing prohibition, including imperative)
- Concept of 'appropriateness' of form used according to the situation or context
- One grammatical form: many meanings

(e.g. the different meanings expressed by the imperative)

- Imperative with 'let's'

- Equivalent expressions to 'let's'
- Different meanings of 'let's'

20 - Prepositions: 'among', 'around', 'round', 'beyond'
- Pronouns

- Pronouns as reference features

- Suffix '-al' in the formation of adjectives

- Review of typical adjective endings (and compared with typical noun endings)

21 Reading: LARGE NUMBERS

22 UNIT VIII - EXPRESSIONS OF MANNER

- Expressions of manner, means, and instrument answering 'How?'
- Prepositions: 'without', 'at', 'in', 'on', 'through', 'between'.

23 Reading: ENERGY

24 - Consolidation exercises
- Final Class Test

5.4 The Experimental Materials

The experimental materials dealt with the teaching of grammatical items as well as skills for reading.

Grammar was taught with the aim of strengthening the students' understanding of the semantic relationship of grammar to notional concepts. This aspect had not been touched on in the Writing Course given to the teachers in 1979-80 and so was something new for the them as well.

Space does not permit a discussion of both the grammatical materials and the exercises for reading, so only the latter will be dealt with here. (An example of the former, however, will be found in Appendix E as part of the complete set of materials for Unit V.)

The originality of the reading materials consisted of a new methodology developed to deal with the same reading passages that the teachers in the first-year undergraduate programme had been teaching for years. This methodology and the progression of steps involved can be observed by an analysis of those highlighted and indented items of the expanded syllabus in section 5.3.1.

5.4.1 **Treatment of the Reading Passages**

A thorough explanation of and commentary on the experimental treatment of reading passages taken from the traditionally-oriented textbook used at ISPJAE seems appropriate given its innovative nature.

The experimental materials attempted to incorporate the three approaches outlined by Howatt (1984:222), -- functional, notional, and reading skills -- by finding an interrelationship in theory and practice between them. The reading passages were used to teach reading skills and the communicative functions found in EST, and, whenever appropriate, notions were related to functions.

An analysis of the readings in **Technical English I** revealed that an outline could be made to show the reading's organizational structure in terms of the communicative functions of its various parts, and that these could be called "topics." In turn, the topics could often be **titled** in such a way as to show explicitly the communicative function of that part of the text.

The following section, 5.4.1.1, goes further into the explanation of the term "topic", but it might be useful to comment here on the question of **titling** a topic, because, as stated above, the experimental materials attempted to show to the students the relationship between topics and communicative functions.

If a reading passage deals with the making of steel, it could be titled in one of several ways, for example:

- Steelmaking
- How to Make Steel
- A Description of the Steelmaking Process

The third title is the one which clearly shows that the topic is the same as the communicative function of process description.

In the experimental materials, this technique was applied in all the units of **Technical English I**. The thematic outline of each reading was worked out by the students,

the purpose of which was to sensitize them to a possible relationship between topic and communicative function.

By way of example, let us examinethe thematic outline for the reading "Plastics":

1. Definition of Plastics
2. Classification of the Types of Plastics
3. Description of the Four Principal Types
3.1. Description of Synthetic Resins
3.2. Description of Natural Resins
3.3. Description of Cellulose Derivatives
3.4. Description of Protein Plastics

This outline could be **titled** in different ways, as shown below; but it is nonetheless clear, that regardless of the title given to the topic, each topic would still correspond to a specific communicative function:

1. What are Plastics? (definition)
2. Types of Plastics (classification)
3. The Four Main Kinds of Plastics (description)
3.1 Synthetic Resins
3.2 Natural Resins
3.3 Cellulose Derivatives
3.4 Protein Plastics

It was theorized that teaching a relationship between topic and communicative function would help the student to apply a knowledge of communicative functions in order

to read more efficiently than had been the case in the postgraduate courses where the students had simply studied functions per se.

The students were taught to use reading skills, especially skimming, in order to quickly identify the topics of the passage. Thus on one level, the materials attempted to relate the recognition of communicative functions with that of a reading's topics, and to identify these through the reading skill of skimming.

On another level, the experimental materials aimed to demonstrate that the language used for a specific function is that which expresses the notions related to the function. For example, the materials tried to clarify how we use language to describe things in terms of the notions underlying description, such as size, shape, colour, etc. The series **Nucleus** had done this implicitly but only with the function of description. Not until the appearance of the series **Meanings into Words**, published after the Cuban field study, was a systematic attempt made to link function, notion, and grammatical meaning.

5.4.1.1 Explanation of the Term "Topic"

The term "topic" was introduced as a central concept in the experimental materials to help students identify and

outline the thematic structure of a written text.

This use of the term, however, requires some explanation because as Brown and Yule (1983:70) point out "... 'topic' could be described as the most frequently used, unexplained, term in the analysis of discourse."

Linguists have defined topic in relation to oral and written discourse at the level of phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and longer stretches of text.

In relation to oral discourse, the definition which Brown and Yule formulated in 1983 is in part applicable to that developed for the written materials of the 1980-82 Cuban field study. The notion of topic, they say (1983:70), is "clearly an intuitively satisfactory way of describing the unifying principle which makes one stretch of discourse 'about' something and the next stretch 'about' something else ...".

In the Cuban field study, we went beyond Brown and Yule's definition to show the students that not only might a topic be recognized "intuitively", but that it can be identified by the rational connection of ideas and objective linguistic "markers".

The author decided to extend the use of the term "markers" to those words, phrases or discoursal features that might indicate or point to the topics in a reading

passage. Because of the possible relationship between topic and communicative function, these markers could indicate communicative function as well. For example, in the reading about Galileo (see Unit II in Appendix D), the students were alerted to such features as verb tense, dates, and expressions of chronological order as potential markers identifying the topic dealing with historical description.

In connection with written discourse, a very straightforward definition of topic is given by Niles et al (1973:107) in their textbook **Reading Tactics:** "A written selection ... has a subject, or **topic.** The topic tells in general terms what the selection contains." Niles et al, however, limit themselves to topics of single paragraphs. In the Cuban field study, a broader conceptual framework was necessary to deal with reading selections of more than one paragraph.

The term "topic" was used to identify what different sections of a reading were about. This is precisely the way in which John Greenwood uses the term in the chapter on **Comprehension and reading** in Abbott and Wingard (1981:102). Greenwood refers to a six-paragraph text on the British education system in which "... Each paragraph had an opening topic sentence and each paragraph dealt with a different topic so that my learners had a clear

framework ...."

The topic-sections of the texts in **Technical English I**, however, did not always correspond exactly to one paragraph. Sometimes, they constituted a paragraph; sometimes they constituted several paragraphs; or sometimes they constituted less than a full paragraph. This coincided with Trimble's observation (1975) that there are physical and conceptual paragraphs, with a conceptual paragraph (which might be more or less than a physical paragraph) corresponding to a topic.

Savignon (1983:38) also uses the term "topic" in relation to written language: "Recognition of the theme or topic of a paragraph, chapter, or book ... requires discourse competence." As we can see, however, Savignon makes no distinction between topic and theme.

Precisely this lack of clarity between terms led to an arbitrary decision, when designing the field study materials, to **not** use the term "topic" in reference to the subject matter of a whole reading passage. Instead, this was referred to as the "general theme".

To further illustrate the thinking behind this decision, consider the situation when the title of a reading is "Glassmaking". The reader knows the reading is about glassmaking; that is the general theme. But which aspects of glassmaking are dealt with in the reading?

For example, does the author deal with the importance of glassmaking, the history of glassmaking, the process of producing glass, the uses of glass, the different types of glass, etc? In other words, what are the topics?

Some authors refer to these so-called topics as the "general ideas". But the term "idea" is even more nebulous than "topic". Ideas can be stated at higher or lower levels of generalization, which makes the use of the term unclear. For instance, when a reader is asked to state the main idea of a reading passage, what is he being asked to do? Is he being asked to state what the reading -- or a section of a reading -- is about (the topic) or is he being asked to summarize the content of the reading (give the gist)?

The term "idea" was not used in any of the exercises of the experimental materials because of its ambiguity. Instead, two concepts were developed and adopted: **topic** and **the information given about the topic.**

Topic refers to what the section of a reading is about, and **Information given about the topic** refers to what is said about it. This is the same distinction between the two types of outlines that one can make before writing an essay or composition: one which outlines the general areas (topics) that one is going to give information about; the other, the main points (information) that one

wants to make.

Niles et al (1973:107-108) make a similar distinction when they refer to **topic** and **central focus.**

> "The topic identifies the general subject of a selection, but the central focus includes **what is said** about the topic ... The understanding you get from the whole paragraph, pointed to by the various details, is the central focus. It expresses the most important thing being said about the topic."

5.4.1.2 **Description, Classification and Definition**

The **Focus** series emphasizes that the three most common communicative functions found in EST are description, classification and definition. The 1975 Washington Summer Institute on the Teaching of English for Science and Technology agreed with this assessment and most scholars accept it as evident.

However, although considerable research has been done on communicative functions, nowhere had the author found reference to work suggesting a logical ordering in the teaching of these three major conceptual categories.

For example, in the different books of the **English in Focus** series, these communicative functions are presented in a different order.

In the first book of the **Focus** series, **English in Mechanical Engineering** (1973), classification was taught

first, followed by description of dimension, definition, and then generalization. In the second book of the series, **English in Physical Science Science** (1974), definition came first followed by description of simple experiments, classification and generalizations.

In developing the experimental materials, the author concluded that it would be more understandable to the students to first teach description, followed by classification and then definition.

This order seemed to be more logical since man first **describes** what he observes, and is then able to group or **classify** things according to common characteristics or criteria of their description. Finally, he is able to differentiate an entity from other members of the same group by stating some aspect of its description that is different or special about it; in so doing, the entity is **defined.**

In view of the fact that general description, classification and definition of phenomena are expressed as generalizations, the concept of generalization was introduced along with the first mention of description.

For example, in Reading I of Unit I, **Electronics**, the electron is described according to its capabilities and its properties. The students are taught that to express

this, the indefinite article and the simple present tense are used, both of which can be markers of generalization. Thus, they could identify as a generalization the descriptive sentence, "An electron has negative electricity."

Examples of physical description appeared in the reading of the first unit of **Technical English**, thus making it possible to introduce the communicative function of description first. A definition also appeared in this very first reading, and in practically every reading thereafter, but the concept of definition was not introduced to the students until Unit IX, the first unit of the second semester.

The purpose of postponing the "teaching" of definition until Unit IX was to familiarize the students with the functions of description and classification and their lingustic expressions beforehand. Classification was introduced in Unit V (and further developed in Unit VI). By this time higher and lower levels of generalizations had been taught (Unit III) and so it was possible to show the relationship between levels of generalization and classification of items.

Up to Unit IX, a given definition was informally identified for the students, in much the same way as O'Neill's **Kernel** series uses previewing. Thus, by the

time the students reached Unit IX, they could recognize many definitions. When they were finally introduced to the conceptual form of a definition and its linguistic expression, the students had no trouble in grasping the concept.

5.4.1.3 Teaching Reading Skills

The teaching of reading skills consisted of making the students aware of the different types of reading (skimming, scanning, search reading, detailed reading), and of the necessity and appropriateness of each type to a reader's purpose in a given situation. Because of the necessity to adhere to the reading materials in the prescribed textbook, practice had to take place within that context only, which was a limiting factor.

Skimming was practised with every reading through the students' search for the topics (and sub-topics). Learning how to identify topics was actively taught in an orderly step-by-step procedure as described in the next section.

Detailed reading was also practised with every reading in the exercises related to language study questions. In these exercises, the students read sentence by sentence to clarify the meaning of connectors, reference features and new lexical items.

Search reading was required with the exercises related to the comprehension of "the information about the topic." To complete these exercises it was not always necessary to understand every word, thus obviating the need for detailed reading in some cases.

The notion of scanning was introduced in Unit IV, and beginning with the reading of that unit, was practised in most of the subsequent units. This was done by asking the student to scan the text and quickly find one or two specific pieces of information.

5.4.1.3.1 **Skimming for the Thematic Outline**

In analyzing the expanded syllabus, it will be seen that there was a procedure for teaching the students how to skim for the thematic outline, or overall structure, of the text. The most important idea was that the students learn to recognize the topics in a reading.

It could not be expected that all students would be able to identify the different topics in a reading without learning how to do it. This learning procedure was carried out step by step with the aim that by the end of the course the student would have developed analytical reading habits.

During the first readings, the students were given

considerable guidance to help them recognize topics. As the course progressed, the students were left more and more on their own.

In Reading I, for example, the notion of the topics and sub-topics in a reading was explained and exemplified to the students by the teacher. In addition, the notion of a non-1:1 relationship between topic and paragraph was explained; i.e. that one topic can correspond to one paragraph, to more than one paragraph, or to part of a paragraph. In this latter case, the same paragraph could possibly contain more than one topic. (As explained above, this notion corresponds to Trimble's (1975) concept of physical and conceptual paragraphs.)

The students were then told how many topics there were in the reading. Titles for the topics were given, as well as the order in which the topics appeared.

Furthermore, the students were told which words to look for in order to be able to identify -- without reading every word -- the paragraph or paragraphs where each topic was found.

The only task assigned to the students with Reading I was to find the paragraph or paragraphs corresponding to each topic. This task was carried out **orally** in class **in discussion with the teacher** -- in Spanish if necessary -- so that the students who were unable to do this on their

own could be guided. (Few, if any, were in fact capable of doing this by themselves in the early stages.)

In Reading II, the students were told how many topics there were, the titles for these topics and the order in which they appeared. They were also told which topic of the reading had sub-topics and what the titles of these were.

Prior to looking at the reading, the students were introduced to the concept of marker and were asked to predict which elements or markers might indicate the topics. This discussion took place orally in class, and the assignment for the students was to identify the paragraphs where the topics and sub-topics appeared.

In Reading IV (Glass), the topics were identified and given to the students in the correct order. There was prior discussion as to which elements, or markers, might help to identify the topic.

In Reading V (Plastics), the topics were identified and given but **not** in their correct order. The students therefore had to find the sections of the reading corresponding to the topics and identify the correct order. In this same reading, one topic was identified as having sub-topics, and the students were asked to identify how many sub-topics there were and to give an

appropriate title for each one.

By the end of the course (Unit XVI), the students were expected to be able to skim the reading and tell the teacher on their own how many topics there were, which sections of the reading they corresponded to and to give an appropriate title for each. These titles did not have to reflect a communicative function.

5.5 Illustration of Treatment of Reading Passages

To explain more adequately the experimental approach used with the readings, and to compare it with the traditional one used in the textbook, **Technical English**, let us examine the materials for **Plastics** from Unit V.

Reading V: Plastics

[1]The development of synthetic plastic materials represents one of the great triumphs of the organic chemist. [2]The term "plastics", used by the modern plastics industry, refers to certain substances manufactured from organic compounds, that is, from combinations of carbon with hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, and other elements. [3] The term does not include inorganic molding materials, such as concrete, cements, and ceramics, nor the organic substance we call rubber.

[4]The four principal types of organic plastics (not including rubber) are synthetic resins, natural resins, cellulose derivatives, and protein substances.

[5]We use synthetic resin plastics to make nylon clothes, unbreakable phonograph records, the plugs of electrical appliances and many other everyday products. [6]The chemist is able to produce resinous materials that are as hard as stone, as transparent as glass, as elastic as rubber. [7]When these materials are combined in the proper way, they can be molded into products that are strong and lightweight, and that resist moisture, moderate heat, sunlight, hard wear and acids.

[8]Natural resins are generally known by their common names, such as shellac, rosin, asphalt and pitch. [9]Natural resins are widely used in industry for the production of the fusible type of molded product. [10]These hot-molding compositions are prepared by mixing shellac, rosin and asphalt with suitable fillers. [11]Compositions containing shellac are used in electrical insulators for high-voltage equipment in telephone parts and in phonograph records. [12]The terms **resin** and **rosin** are often confused. [13]Rosin is a natural resin recovered as a solid residue after distillation of turpentine from pine tree

extracts.

Cellulose derivatives. [14]This type of organic plastic is probably the most widely used. [15]The celluloid plastic used for making toys, pens, pencils, etc.; the cellulose acetate; the familiar cellophane and the common type of rayon, all belong to this group of plastics. [16]The basic raw material, cellulose, is obtained from ordinary cotton or pulped wood. [17]Treatment with chemicals converts cellulose into compounds that take any desirable shape. [18]These plastics conduct heat slowly and can be tasteless, odorless and transparent. [19]Their uses include photographic film, safety glass, lacquers, etc.

Protein plastics. [20]These plastics are obtained from different sources, such as milk and soybean. [21]These proteins are processed into a colloidal mass and finally formed into sheets, rods or tubes. [22]The resulting product is used to make small articles such as buttons, beads, buckles, and other accessories.

5.5.1 Organization of the Reading Passage

The reading is made up of six paragraphs. The first defines the term "plastics" according to its method of

production. The second paragraph classifies organic plastics into four types on the basis of their organic composition, and then each of the following paragraphs describes one of those four types: the third paragraph describes synthetic resin plastics; the fourth describes natural resins; the fifth describes cellulose derivatives, and the sixth describes protein plastics.

We could also say that the first two paragraphs introduce the theme of the reading, plastics, by defining what plastics are and classifying the four main types, and that paragraphs 3 to 6 develop the theme by describing each of the four types of plastics in terms of such aspects as products, method of preparation of products and their properties.

5.5.2 Comparison and Discussion of the Two Methodologies: M-I (Traditional) and M-II (Experimental)

5.5.2.1 Methodologies

The traditional methodology will be referred to as M-I, and the experimental methodology as M-II.

The purpose of presenting an example of how two differing sets of exercises can completely alter the pedagogical approach to the same reading passage is to show, in a specific manner, the methodological technique that was used in the field study.

What follows is the complete set of exercises (four in all) from the textbook **Technical English I** which accompanies the reading **Plastics.** They represent the traditional methodology, M-I.

An analysis of these M-I exercises will be made following Exercise 4. This analysis will then be followed by the M-II exercises which were written especially for the field study for the same reading passage.

5.5.2.1.1 The M-I Methodology

Exercise 1

Answer the questions based on the reading:

1. What are plastics made from?
2. Is cement an organic or inorganic molding material?
3. What is one of the principal qualities of the synthetic resin products?
4. What are electrical insulators made from?
5. How is rosin obtained?
6. What is ordinary cotton used for in the plastic industry?
7. Name a very common cellulose derivative plastic used in everyday life.
8. Which compounds take any desirable shape?
9. Which plastics have no taste?
10. Which are the basic raw materials for the production of protein plastics?

Exercise 2

A) Find an adequate single-word modifier for each of the following words:

_____	plastic	_____	resin
_____	chemist	_____	glass
_____	industry	_____	record
_____	materials	_____	heat
_____	substances	_____	wood
_____	insulators	_____	products
_____	clothes	_____	type
_____	derivatives		

B) Find an adequate phrase modifier for each of the following words:

industry _____

combinations _____

type _____

insulators _____

distillation _____

treatment _____

Exercise 3

Fill in the blanks with words from the list:

moisture - plugs - fillers - appliances - shapes suitable - sheets - triumphs.

1. One of the great _____ of the organic chemist is the development of synthetic plastics.

2. Substances added to other substances to increase their volume are called _____ .

3. Cellulose derivatives can be molded into products of different _____.

4. Plastics are also produced in thin, light and transparent _____.

5. The _____ of some electrical _____ are made of plastics.

Exercise 4

Find, copy, and translate:

1. a sentence in the passive voice.
2. a modifier that is a noun, and the word it modifies.
3. an **-ing** modifier, and the word it modifies.
4. a past participle or **-ed** modifier, and the word it modifies.
5. an adjective and the noun it modifies.
6. a phrase modifier and the noun it modifies.

5.5.2.1.2 Analysis of the M-I Exercises

Only Exercise 1 is really concerned with the comprehension of the content of the reading passage. Exercises 2, 3, and 4 are concerned with vocabulary and grammar found in the passage.

Furthermore, the exercises dealing with vocabulary and grammar are not in any way related to the ideas or information found in the text; they are simply isolated examples which could have been found in **any** text. That they are found in a text about plastics is purely coincidental. In fact, one can conjecture that the reading passage, **Plastics**, was chosen by the authors of

the textbook for the fact that it contained very good examples of all the different types of modifiers found in English.

Exercise 1, although dealing with the content of the text, does not require the student to understand the organization of the reading in terms of what it is about. The comprehension questions operate strictly at the level of the sentences, and the students only need to understand those specific sentences in the text where the information corresponding to the questions appears. In other words, they look for details. What is more, these details often constitute secondary information (e.g. Question 4 about what electrical insulators are made from).

We can therefore say that questions of the type found in Exercise 1 of M-I lead the student to an understanding of the particular without ever grasping the general or overall comprehension of the text. Furthermore, the comprehension questions do not help the student to analyze the information in order to arrive at an understanding of it. They do not teach; they test.

As said above, Exercises 2, 3, and 4 have nothing to do with the understanding of the text, so the student practises with one exercise only as a means of learning how to analyze a reading passage for its content.

5.5.2.1.3 The M-II Experimental Methodology

Let us now examine the experimental methodology in order to compare it with the traditional one. The six exercises which follow constitute the complete set of exercises developed for use with the same reading passage, **Plastics**, from Unit V.

Exercise 1: Identification of the topics and sub-topics

1. There are three main topics in this reading. They are listed below but **not** in their correct order. Number them according to their order in the reading and write down the paragraph(s) which correspond to each topic.

Order	**Topic**	**Paragraph(s)**
_____	Types of organic plastics	_____
_____	Description of the different types of organic plastics	_____
_____	Definition of the term "plastics"	_____

2. (a) Which of the topics has sub-topics? _____

   (b) How many sub-topics are there? _____

   (c) Write down an appropriate title for each, and the number of the paragraph where the sub-topic is found:

Exercise 2: Language Study Questions (Topic 1)

Answer the questions after you have read the sentence indicated. These questions will help you to understand new words, difficult grammatical structures, and the relationships between ideas.

1. Read sentence 1:

   (a) **synthetic plastic materials** means materials that are made of synthetic plastics.

   (b) an **organic chemist** is:
   i. a science
   ii. a person
   iii. a substance

   (c) **triumph** is a synonym of **victory**. What do these two words mean in Spanish? _____ and _____

2. Read sentence 2:

   The expression **that is** indicates that what follows:
   i. is an example of previous information
   ii. is additional and different information
   iii. states the previous information in a different way

   ∴combinations of carbon with hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and other elements
   i. are examples of organic compounds
   ii. are not organic compounds; they are something else

3. Read Sentence 3:

   (a) Which term does not include inorganic molding materials? _____

   (b) 1. What are concrete, cements, and ceramics examples of? _____

   2. Which expression in Sentence 3 indicates that an example follows?

   _____

Exercise 3: The essential information in Topic 1

Topic 1 deals with the definition of the term "plastics".

1. (a) The definition of "plastics" that is given in this reading is:
   i. a general definition for all situations
   ii. a specific, or restricted, definition

   (b) Support your answer to (a). If necessary answer in Spanish. _____

Exercise 4: The essential information in paragraph 3

In paragraph 2, we are told that there are four principal types of organic plastics. Paragraph 3 describes one of those types in terms of the products that are made from it and its properties. Complete the chart below that summarizes this information:

Type of organic plastic: _____

Products (examples)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Properties

(a) of synthetic resins:

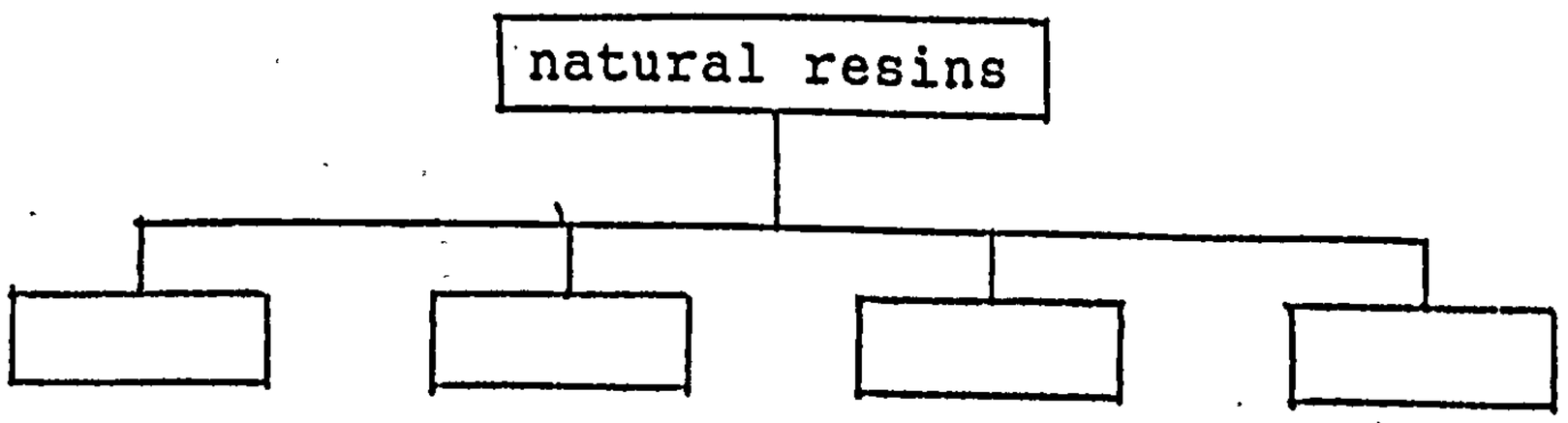
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

(b) of products made from synthetic resins:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Exercise 5: Essential information in paragraph 4

1. Classify the types of natural resins mentioned in the reading by filling in the chart below:



2. Complete the following chart that summarizes the information in paragraph 4.

Type of organic plastic: _____

Members of this group: _____
rosin_____
_____

Products
a. type: _____
b. method of preparation: _____
c. examples of use: _____

Exercise 6: Essential information in paragraphs 5 and 6

1. Which of the following information is given in paragraphs 5 and 6 about cellulose derivatives and protein plastics? If the information is given, write in the blank the number of the sentence where it is found. If the information is not given, mark the blank with an 'X'.

Information	**Cellulose Derivatives**	**Protein Plastics**
Examples of products	_____	_____
Method of preparation	_____	_____
Properties	_____	_____
Basic raw material and/or source from which produced	_____	_____
Classification of different types	_____	_____

In Chapter III, we studied that there are different levels of generality. In the last sentence of the reading, we have an example of a 3-level generalization. To help you identify it, three sentences are written below. Number them 1. 2. 3. from the most general to the least general:

_____ Protein plastics are used to make beads and buttons.
_____ Protein plastics are used to make small articles.
_____ Protein plastics are used to make accessories.

5.5.2.1.4 **Analysis of the M-II Exercises**

The purpose of Exercise 1 is to give the students an overall view of the organization of the reading passage. To have this overall view of a text, the reader must **skim** read. This is a reading skill which very few of the students had developed in their own language, and if they had developed it, it had been empirically. No student had ever been consciously trained to skim read.

The exercises in the experimental materials were designed so as to **train** the students in various reading skills, one of which is skimming. As outlined earlier in Section 5.4.1.3.1, this training was designed as a series of steps in a learning process.

By this unit of the course, Unit V, the topics of the reading are still being given but not in their correct order; furthermore, the students must identify for themselves which topic has sub-topics, how many sub-topics there are, and must provide an appropriate title for each. This is a number of steps beyond the situation in Unit II where the students are given the number of topics, titles for the topics, titles for the three sub-topics of one of the topics and the paragraphs where all the topics and sub-topics are found. The only thing required of the student in Unit II is to identify the markers of the topics. (See Appendix D for the exercises

corresponding to the reading in Unit II.)

The purpose of Exercise 2 (Language Study Questions) is to clarify any aspects of the reading which, if not understood, might impede understanding of the information related to a particular topic. Thus, the students read sentence by sentence, in a very detailed way, concentrating their attention on linguistic problems such as new words, difficult grammatical structures, elements of cohesion, and words which connect ideas (connectors).

The objective of this type of exercise is to help the students solve any linguistic problems which they might have, by means of explanations leading to a solution of these problems through inference or logical deduction. The students are therefore given an opportunity to develop their reasoning powers.

Ideally, language study questions (which constitute this type of exercise) should have been presented in the margin of the reading, such as was developed in the textbook, **Discovering Discourse** from the series, **Reading and Thinking in English.** Because of the serious shortage of paper, however, the readings from **Technical English I** could not be printed on separate pages for the students. Rather, the students were each given a copy of the textbook, and asked to refer to the reading in the book while answering the questions. (For the convenience of

the reader of this thesis, however, the readings have been typed out to accompany the exercises in Appendix D.)

Exercise 3 has to do with the same part of the reading passage as Exercise 2. Here, the purpose is to have the students understand the information related to the topic of this part of the passage. Again, we observe that the methodology is geared to help the student -- by means of explanations -- to understand the reading. Here, the student would not have to read in such a detailed way.

Exercises 4, 5, and 6 have to do with paragraphs 3, 4, 5, and correspond to Topic 3: Description of the Four Main Types of Plastics. Their objective is to help the students identify the main characteristics of the four types of plastics mentioned in paragraph 2. Like Exercise 3, the objective of the methodology is to guide the student. It will also be observed that in these exercises the students practise transferring information from one form to another, in this case from a descriptive form to a form of note-taking.

In this particular unit, Exercises 4, 5, and 6, are not preceded by language study exercises, as in Exercise 2; it was felt that here there are no linguistic problems, or that an understanding of every word and phrase is not asbsolutely necessary for an understanding of the essential ideas contained in this section of the text.

5.5.3 **Summary**

As we have seen, the traditional M-I exercises operate strictly at the level of the sentence and test comprehension of specific details which are not related to the text as a whole. They do not help the student arrive at an understanding of the text as discourse. The exercises of M-II, on the other hand, help the student to analyze the hierarchy of ideas, and to see the relationship between the details and the text as a whole.

As a result of the type of exercise practised in M-II, the students should be able to generalize the reading strategies they have learned and thus be able to apply them in obtaining information from other texts. In contrast, the M-I type of exercise only **tests** the students' ability to obtain information from one specific text. It is not a methodology that teaches the students reading skills that can later be generalized and applied to other texts.

In conclusion, we can say that the traditional methodology (M-I) is essentially sentence-based with a heavy emphasis on the study of grammatical structures and lexical items whereas M-II, the experimental methodology, corresponds to a discoursal approach.

Let us now turn to the next chapter for an analysis and discussion of the results of the field study.

CHAPTER SIX

PHASE III:

THE INTRODUCTION OF A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH INTO THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME AT ISPJAE

PART 3: EXPERIMENTAL FIELD STUDY: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, three sets of data will be discussed:

- the results of the 1981-82 controlled matched-group experiment as measured by the gain scores achieved on a proficiency test applied at the beginning and again at the end of the 1981-82 academic year to control and experimental groups;
- the results of the three surveys administered to first-year students at the end of Semester I in December during the three consecutive academic years of 1979-80, 1980-81, and 1981-82, bearing in mind that traditional materials were used in 1979-80 and experimental ones in both 1980-81 and 1981-82;
- the results of the survey administered in June 1982 to ten of the 19 first-year teachers who had used the traditional materials prior to 1980 and the experimental materials during the field study.

In addition, there will be some discussion of the other means by which the experimental materials were evaluated by the teachers and the author herself.

6.2 Results of the 81-82 Matched-Group Experiment

As outlined in the design of the experiment (See 5.2), six groups of students from the Central University of Las Villas were used as control groups. They were chosen on the basis of teacher experience from the faculties of Architecture (1 group), Sugar (1), Chemical Engineering (1), Electronics (1) and Machine Design (2).

By means of a proficiency test, they were matched with six groups from the corresponding faculties in Havana before the start of the 1981-82 academic year in September 1981 (Time 1). In June 1982, (Time 2) the same proficiency test was applied to both the control and experimental groups. Subtracting Time 1 from Time 2, a gain score for each student was obtained, and from this, the mean and standard deviation for the group was calculated.

A t-test for a two-tailed hypothesis was applied to determine if any difference in the mean was significant at $p = 0.05$. A summary of the results appears on the next page. Where the difference in scores is significant, the direction is indicated (i.e. whether it is in favour of the control group (C) or whether it is in favour of the experimental group (E).

(See Appendix C for all raw scores pertaining to both the matching of the groups and the gain scores.)

Faculty/Group	Control (Las Villas)	Experimental (Havana)
Architecture		
n	12	22
mean	- 9.00	6.55
s.d.	3.46	4.44
	t = 8.46	
	(32 degrees of freedom)	
	significant (E)	
Sugar		
n	17	23
mean	4.41	3.22
s.d.	6.61	5.53
	t = -0.60	
	(21 degrees of freedom)	
	not significant	
Electronics		
n	26	29
mean	7.54	6.31
s.d.	4.69	5.16
	t = - 0.88	
	(53 degrees of freedom)	
	not significant	
Machine Construction		
n	07	20
mean	8.14	3.55
s.d.	4.38	4.85
	t = -2.32	
	(25 degrees of freedom)	
	significant (C)	

6.2.1 Discussion of Matched-Group Results

Experiments are designed in such a way to give results that should be "conclusive", whether negatively or

positively. In the Cuban study, the experiment was set up to show the superiority of one methodological approach over another, whether it be the old over the new or -- as was expected -- the new over the old.

The results, however, could be said to be inconclusive for they do not demonstrate a clear distinction between one methodology and the other. In the case of the Architectural students, there was a significant statistical difference in favour of the experimental materials. For the students in Machine Construction, the reverse was true: the control materials were shown to be superior. And in the case of the groups from Sugar and Electronics, no significant difference between the two groups was established. In other words, there was what might be termed a "statistical stalemate."

This stalemate could nonetheless have been used to support a claim that because the new approach was shown to be no different from the traditional approach in terms of knowledge gained, then it was not necessary to introduce change. A decision to continue using the same approach would have been justified.

Had such a such a decision been taken, it would have met with stout resistance, for in the minds of those who actually worked with the experimental materials, there was a strong conviction that the new way was better than

the old, and the final outcome of the two-year field study was the adoption of the new approach in the writing of the textbooks for second-year engineering students.

Psychometric tests are as objective as anything can be in educational research. Nevertheless, the research team discounted the results and recommended that the experimental approach be used in the new textbooks. One might wonder whether this reaction on the part of the teachers was due to a rejection of psychometric testing in general. As shown by the answers to the questions on the teachers' surveys at the end of the academic year, this was not the case. The majority of teachers respected "objective" testing and were pleased with their experience during the field study because they had learned so much about research techniques.

The question the research team asked themselves was, "If greater learning did take place in the experimental groups, as we believe it did, why didn't the test results demonstrate this? Were these results reliable?"

The team decided that the results were not reliable because of two main problems: monitoring the work in the control groups and an invalid proficiency test.

The monitoring of the control groups proved to be especially difficult, as an examination of the data makes

clear. In the first place, statistics for two pairs of matched groups are missing. Although six control groups were selected in Las Villas and matched with six groups in Havana by means of the proficiency test applied in September 1981, the proficiency test was not re-applied to two of the Las Villas groups in June 1982. Added to the problem of the missing scores is the fact that fewer students in each of the Las Villas groups sat the final test than did the students in the corresponding group in Havana. The following table summarizes this fact.

	Number of Students Sitting Final Test			
	Havana		Las Villas	
Architecture	22/32	75%	12/30	40%
Sugar	23/28	86%	17/22	76%
Electronics	29/29	100%	26/29	90%
Machine Cons.	20/30	67%	7/22	32%

Many factors contributed to making it difficult to oversee the work of the control groups. Transportation was a constant problem as Las Villas is some four hours over land from Havana. A car was not always available, and buses and trains are unpredictable. But perhaps the greatest deterrent in controlling the work in Las Villas was the author's heavy work load in Havana, making it impossible for her to visit Las Villas more than three times: at the beginning of the academic year, between semesters and at the end of the course. In other words,

only once during the academic year was she able to go to Las Villas and that was during an inter-semester break, so on no occasion did she actually see a class in action.

During this latter visit, she received a progress report from the head of Department on the work in the control groups, and realized that pressure of work did not permit the head of department to adequately supervise the work in the control groups on a regular basis.

It was discovered after the final results were tabulated that, unbeknownst to the department head in Las Villas, experimentation had gone on in several groups and had even involved the use of some of the experimental materials from Havana, which had found their way into the hands of the teachers who then incorporated them into their classes.

In analyzing these irregularities, the question of motivation should be considered. The research team did not include any of the Las Villas staff because of the difficulty in communication between the two universities and so there was no real commitment to ensuring that the project be carried out successfully.

In addition to the problem of adequate supervision and commitment, one must also take into account the question of devising an appropriate proficiency test capable of

testing students taught by different methodologies.

To have validity for the experimental groups, the test needed to assess the progress made in analyzing texts from a discourse point of view. This posed a dilemma as many members of the research team argued against including items on the test that would require of the control groups skills which they had not been taught through the traditional methodology. Much discussion of this point took place, but in the end the team accepted to devise a test that did not fully reflect the new methodology. (An analysis of the test, reproduced in Appendix C, will reveal that there are items requiring the students to understand discourse features, such as reference, logical connection, and an appropriate topic for a text, but they are not required to deal with a complete text as is necessary in order to summarize ideas, convert information from the form of words to the form of a diagram, etc.)

In light of the research team's conclusion that the experimental methodology was superior to the traditional one, it is helpful to study the results of the surveys which the teachers and the students completed once the field study was concluded in June 1982. These surveys, discussed in Sections 6.3 and 6.4 on the following pages, show that the teachers' attitudes towards change and innovation are very positive and are reinforced by the

results of students' surveys.

The teachers' and students' reactions to the experimental materials do not, however, give us a complete answer to another question, "What factors outweighed the evidence presented by the statistics in the psychometric experiment and led the teachers to endorse a new experimental methodology?" The next chapter, the Conclusions chapter, explores the wider range of situational factors which, in the author's opinion, helped create the necessary climate in which the field study played a vital role in the process of change in ELT in Cuba.

6.3 Teachers' Evaluation

The ways in which the teachers evaluated the field study were the following:

:In both years of the field study (1980-81 and 1981-82), oral evaluations were made during the fortnightly methodological meetings. These meetings were held to review the previous two weeks' work and to work through the materials for the coming two weeks. During this day-long session, the teachers made suggestions for improvement, all of which were recorded by the teacher responsible for keeping minutes of the session. These evaluations were invaluable in re-working and improving

the materials for the 1981-82 academic year.

:In both 1980-81 and 1981-82, the First Year Course Director and the author made regular classroom visits. After each visit the class was analyzed in terms of the effectiveness of the materials and the teachers' ability to handle them. As in the case of the teachers' oral evaluation of the classes, these assessments were important in the development of the final version of the materials used in 1981-82.

:During the second year of the field study (1981-82) a written evaluation of every class was made by all 19 teachers of First Year once they had taught the materials with all their groups. (Most teachers taught four groups of students.) In their evaluations, the teachers were asked to take into consideration the following aspects:

: the length of the class, i.e. whether the amount of material could be comfortably covered in the two 50-minute sessions which constituted one class;

: the content of the teaching material;

: the presentation of the items;

: specific problems.

In addition, they were asked to make an overall evaluation of the class in terms of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, with 5 equivalent to excellent. (3) (See Appendix C: Example of Teachers' Evaluations of Individual Classes.)

:At the end of the 1981-82 field study, the 19 participating teachers filled in a survey evaluating the field study. (See Appendix C: Survey of Teachers' Opinions of 1981-82 Field Study.) Two sets of data were obtained from this survey:

: a comparative evaluation of the two methodologies used in the field study made by ten of the nineteen teachers, who had taught in courses prior to the 1980-81 academic year with the traditional materials. (See section 6.3.1 below.)

: an evaluation made by all nineteen teachers of their personal learning as a result of the two-year field study. These evaluations are incorporated into Section 6.5 at the end of the chapter.

6.3.1 Comparative Evaluation of the Two Methodologies (10 teachers)

The ten teachers participating in the field study who had taught the traditional materials prior to 1980-81, filled in a questionnaire to evaluate fourteen aspects which applied to both the traditional (M-I) and experimental (M-II) approach, and three major aspects which could only apply to the experimental materials.

In the chart on the following page, the aspects surveyed are shown along with the results obtained.

G=Good; F=Fair; P=Poor;
N/C=No comment

ASPECTS	M-II (NEW) G	F	P	M-I (OLD) G	F	P	N/C
1. Lesson plans	10	-	-	-	7	2	1
2. Presentation of grammatical structures	7	3	-	2	6	2	-
3. Explanation to the students of grammatical structures	9	1	-	4	5	1	-
4. Grammatical exercises	8	2	-	1	5	4	-
5. Linking exercises between units	9	1	-	-	4	6	-
6. Exercises for reading comprehension	10	-	-	2	2	6	-
7. Logical sequence and progression of teaching items	9	1	-	2	2	6	-
8. Consolidation of reading skills	7	3	-	-	2	4	4
9. Student motivation and participation in class	9	1	-	1	6	2	1
10. Development of inference skills	8	2	-	-	3	5	2
11. Ability to understand relationships between ideas	8	2	-	-	3	2	5
12. Ability to extract a text's essential information	7	3	-	-	2	4	4
13. Ability to obtain general and specific information	5	5	-	-	2	3	5
14. Vocabulary expansion	2	8	-	2	5	2	1
NEW ASPECTS							
1. Students' study notes	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Detailed teachers' notes on methodology and linguistic theory	9	1	-	-	-	-	-
3. Ability to make summaries	5	5	-	-	-	-	-

6.3.1.1 **Comments on Results of Teachers' Survey**

The survey results show that higher marks were given to the new approach in all categories of the evaluation than were given to the traditional approach. Furthermore, in M-II, no aspect was evaluated as 'poor', whereas in M-I all the aspects received an evaluation of 'poor' by at least one person and in most cases by more than two.

The majority of the teachers evaluated M-II as 'good' in the first twelve of the fourteen aspects. The evaluation for Aspect 13, "the ability to obtain general and specfic information" (through skimming and scanning), was divided evenly between good and fair. Only in Aspect 14, "vocabulary expansion", did more teachers consider that the advances in M-II had been fair rather than good (8-2). The author concurs with this assessment, which can be explained by the fact that no innovative materials were introduced for vocabulary building. The teachers nonetheless felt that work with vocabulary in M-I had been even less effective.

On the other hand, the majority of the teachers evaluated M-I as 'fair' or 'poor' in almost all aspects; furthermore, for some aspects they expressed no opinion (N/C = No Comment), possibly considering that the particular aspect had not been dealt with in M-I.

Turning again to M-II, we see that there was a unanimous

rating of 'good' for the exercises for reading comprehension, the daily lesson plans for the teachers, and the study notes for the students. Nine out of ten also gave this maximum rating of 'good' to the explanation of grammatical structures, the logical sequence and progression of teaching items, the linking exercises between units, detailed teachers' notes on methodology and linguistic theory, as well as to the important indicators of student motivation and participation.

Also of great import was the teachers' recognition that a communicative approach developed in the engineering students inference skills and the ability to understand relationships between ideas. Eight of the ten teachers rated both of these aspects as 'good' for M-II, while none of them gave this maximum rating for M-I.

The overall conclusion that one can draw from these results is that the teachers assessed the experimental materials to be very much more effective than the traditional ones, and that the approach used in the materials represented a step forward in better teaching methods.

6.4 Students' Surveys

When the field study was designed in June 1980, it was

decided to take advantage of existing data collected during the previous academic year from a survey administered to all ISPJAE first-year students in December 1979 at the end of the first semester. Thus, a survey with the same questions was administered at the same point in the 1980-81 and 1981-82 academic years as it had been given in 1979-80.

6.4.1 Comparison of the Traditional and Experimental Materials (1979, 1980, 1981 Surveys)

The answers given to these three surveys allow for a comparison of attitudes towards aspects of their English course of three groups of students at the same moment of their studies during three consecutive years. It must be kept in mind that the traditional materials were used in the 1979-80 academic year, while experimental materials were used in 1980-81 and again in 1981-82.

Academic Year:	**1979-80 (Traditional)**	**1980-81 (Experimental)**	**1981-82 (Experimental)**
Total Number of Students Surveyed	**776**	**775**	**1115**
1. Age			
17	83	43	147
18	367	547	790
19	159	143	130
20	83	17	12
20+	0	13	24
No Answer	84	12	12

Academic Year:	1979-80 (Traditional)	1980-81 (Experimental)	1981-82
Total Number of Students Surveyed	**776**	**775**	**1115**
2. Educational background			
Senior high school	567	736	897
Other medium-level schools	95	25	202
No answer	114	14	16
3. Compared with the English classes received before coming to university, would you say that the classes you have received here were -- in terms of methodology and teaching techniques:			
Not as good	43	21	19
The same	223	95	96
Better	245	651	942
No answer	265	8	58
4. Which teaching method do you prefer:			
The one without translation	206	113	185
The one with translation	374	661	923
No answer	196	1	7
5. How much did you learn in this past semester?			
Very little	35	21	46
A little	454	292	418
A lot more than I knew	286	458	644
No answer	1	4	7
6. Do you consider that the classes you received were:			
Poor	2	1	6
Fair	95	76	82
Good	661	695	1018
No answer	18	3	9

Academic Year:	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
Total Number of Students Surveyed	**776**	**775**	**1115**
7. How much time did you devote to studying English? every week?			
Less than 1 hour	158	101	156
1-2 hours	415	465	367
More than 2 hours	200	205	579
No answer	3	4	13
8. How was your attention in class?			
Zero	1	0	0
Poor	16	13	13
Fair	316	227	358
Good	402	528	741
No answer	41	7	3
9. Do you consider that English is important in your profession?			
Yes	683	677	1003
No	16	4	10
No opinion	56	89	98
No answer	21	5	4

6.4.1.1 Comments on the Students' Surveys

One of the striking features of these results is the fact that a large number of students in the 1979-80 group did not answer certain questions (particularly Questions 3 and 4), while at the same time almost 100% of the same students did answer certain other questions (Questions 5, 6, 7, and 9). The fact of **not** answering certain questions could therefore be attributed to the students'

indecisive reaction to the specific query and not to a lack of interest in the survey, particularly when we consider that exactly the same questions were asked of the students in the 1980-81 and 1981-82 years, and well over 95% of the students in both those years answered all the questions. For this reason, the no answer is taken into consideration when analyzing the results.

Comparing the answers to the nine questions, we can see that the three groups were comparable in the following aspects:

- age (Question 1)
- educational background (Question 2)
- opinion of the classes (Question 6)
- amount of time devoted to studying English (Question 7)
- recognition of the importance of English (Question 9)

Summarizing, we see that the students in all three groups fell roughly into the same age group, came from the same kinds of schools, spent a comparable amount of time studying English every week, and all considered that English was important to them as future engineers. Furthermore, a high majority in all three groups felt that the classes were good. One can interpret this to mean that they considered the teachers proficient and experienced, and that the classes as such were well organized and well managed.

The areas where the opinions of the students differed were:

- the methodology and teaching techniques used in the English classes at university compared with the grammar-based audiolingual method used in their studies at the pre-univeristy level (Question 3)
- the use of translation (Question 4)
- the amount they had learned in the course (Question 5)
- attention in class (Question 8)

Both groups using the experimental materials felt they had learned more than did the group using the traditional materials, and their attention in class was slightly better.

An interesting difference in opinion was the one related to translation (Question 4). Close to 85% of the students in both groups using the experimental materials rated the use of translation very highly, whereas just under 50% of the group using the traditional method indicated that they found translation useful. The difference in opinion was no doubt due to the way that translation was used in the two methods.

In the traditional method, the students were required to translate the entire reading passage as a way of "testing comprehension." Such a procedure did not consciously teach the students much about English. Nor did it seem

to motivate them: the teachers complained that many students frequently copied each other's work, thus showing indifference to the value of the exercise.

In the experimental method, the students were only asked to translate certain phrases and expressions in order to compare English with Spanish in areas where interference from Spanish could cause a problem. It was also used to point out to the students how the same idea was expressed differently in the two languages. Also, Spanish was used in the students' study notes, again as a way of comparing and contrasting the expression of ideas in English and Spanish, and to teach them something about discourse in Spanish. (See Appendix E for an example of the students' study notes.)

The most significant difference in the survey results lay in the students' opinion of the traditional methodology and teaching techniques compared with the experimental ones. (Question 3)

Fewer than 30% of the 776 students in the 1979-80 academic year considered that the methodology at university was better than that with which they were taught at the secondary-school level. Another 33% considered it to be the same and roughly 34% did not answer the question.

On the other hand, in the two groups that used the

experimental materials (1980-81 and 1981-82), more than 90% of the students considered the methodology to be superior.

In view of the fact that the students using the traditional methods were of the same age group and of the same academic background, concurred in their view of the teaching staff, spent roughly the same amount of time studying, and held the same opinion about the importance of English as did the students using the experimental materials, we can justifiably state that the differences in opinion regarding methodology are significant.

In other words, the results of these surveys show that a communicative approach was considered by the students to be superior to the traditional method. The students using the experimental materials considered that they had learned more than the students who had used the traditional method, and also felt that the use of the mother tongue -- when employed to compare and contrast it with the target language -- was very helpful.

6.5 **Controlled Matched-Group Experiments: Why Bother?**

In light of the fact that the teachers were unanimous in their overall assessment that the experimental methodology was superior to the traditional one and that this ran counter to the statistical results of the

controlled experiment, which showed no difference between the two approaches, one final question begs answering:

Was there any value in doing a controlled experiment?

In the opinion of the author, the answer is "yes". The value, however, did not lie in carrying out a controlled experiment per se. The value lay in doing an experiment in which the entire first-year staff -- as well as five of the eight second-year teachers -- were involved. Had only the author with one or two other teachers taken part -- as was originally contemplated -- it is doubtful whether the others would have been convinced, or as convinced as they were. Their active participation was a necessary ingredient for obtaining the final outcome.

The model for experimental research comes from the physical sciences and, the point has often been made that it is probably not the most appropriate one for the social sciences because of the difficulty in controlling the variables when dealing with human beings. Nonetheless it is the best developed model which exists at the present time and until a more adequate framework of investigation combining both quantitative and qualitative data is found, it should not be abandonned.

Had the teachers not considered the field study to be an investigative process, it is likely that they would not

have participated with the same enthusiasm and the same degree of seriousness. Having a framework within which to operate led to discipline and a sense of gaining knowledge in a new field of endeavour. The experiment required the teachers to acquire the tools of research: to formulate hypotheses, define variables, devise tests and surveys, and carry out statistical calculations. Perhaps the outcomes which these processes themselves generated were, in the long run, more valuable than anything else. Certainly the comments on the survey which the teachers completed at the end of the field study in June 1982 indicate this. Below are the most relevant:

: for the first time have learned the ABC's of research and have become aware of the importance of scientific testing

: have seen the value of constantly evaluating and analyzing the teaching materials and the presentation of items in class

: have now applied to my own reading -- in both English and Spanish -- the techniques we have been teaching the students. These include skimming and scanning, understanding the relationship between ideas and how to summarize the main points in a text

: have much better command of the English language

One of the the most encouraging comments was made by a veteran teacher in the department who was one of the co-authors of the textbook **Technical English I** (4). Two years after the field study ended, he commented:

> "One of the most important things for me was to discover that I could change the same materials that I had been using for years into something completely different. This revived my interest in teaching, because I was becoming bored and was considering leaving the profession for something more challenging."

A major conclusion, then, that can be drawn from all the data is that the **product** of the field study in general and the conventional experiment in particular was of less importance to the development of improved ELT materials and methods in Cuba than the **process**.

Did that process only concern the field study or where there other factors and elements? When did the process begin, and was the outcome something lasting or merely a Hawthorne effect, born of the enthusiasm of the moment? These are the questions that the Conclusions chapter and the Epilogue attempt to answer.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

In Chapter Six we analyzed and discussed the results of the 1980-82 field study which was carried out in order to determine whether a communicative approach should be introduced to the undergraduate English programme for engineering students in Cuba. We saw that despite the fact that the results of a controlled matched-group experiment proved to be inconclusive, the approach was adopted in the writing of new textbooks for students studying English at Cuba's schools of engineering beginning in 1984. We stated that in the final analysis it was a question of process and not product that determined the final acceptance of this new approach to the teaching of English in a specific developing country, Cuba.

In this chapter we will explore what might have been the psychological, sociological and strategic factors as well as the political interplay that played a part in that process. An attempt will be made to uncover the very complex and often contradictory elements that arose in the search for, introduction and development of innovative ideas.

We will leave to the Epilogue the answer to the question: was the communicative approach in Cuba a passing fad or

has it endured the test of time?

The singling out of these objectives for this chapter stems from the realization that success in the sort of endeavour undertaken in Cuba probably takes far more than a mastery of teaching methods, skills and techniques. These are essential. But even the most gifted and tenacious pedagogical practitioners are likely to fail if they do not respond to the idiosyncratic conditions in a country and -- if the practitioners are foreign advisors -- to the specific expectations of their hosts, be they students, colleagues or government officials.

This does not mean sacrificing one's own professional rigour, personality or principles. What it does mean is striving for the delicate balance between manifest authority and accommodation.

The observations and conclusions in this chapter are, of course, drawn from a very distinctive historical-pedogogical experience.

By the time the Canadian specialists arrived in Cuba, the island's educational system had been totally nationalized for ten years. Different ministries, each highly centralized, controlled major chunks of the system: i.e. the Ministry of Education (kindergarten through

university, until 1976 when the Ministry of Higher Education was created); Ministry of Public Health (medical schools); Institute of Tourism (specialized tourist trade schools); Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Higher Institute of International Relations) and so on.

The principal experience described in the thesis took place first under the aegis of the Ministry of Education and then under the Ministry of Higher Education, and specifically at the Higher Polytechnic Institute, ISPJAE, where the author held the post of English language teaching adviser.

ISPJAE is the "centro rector", or administrative centre, for the island's other engineering schools. What was developed at ISPJAE has been applied throughout the country. Moreover, because of horizontal relationships between the different spheres of Cuba's educational system, though unstructured, the experimental work done at ISPJAE became the basis for innovations in other major teaching centres, such as the medical schools.

There may be no equivalent of the Cuban situation in other Third World nations since most specialists teaching English as a Foreign Language in other countries are unlikely to deal with as large a number of students and native teachers as was the case in Cuba. Nor, because of the centralized nature of Cuban education, is the outcome

of their work liable to have as great national ramifications.

The author believes, however, that some of her conclusions may be useful to specialists who face the challenge of teaching English in other foreign lands and circumstances. Each diverse experience can add something to the common pool of knowledge from which all EFL teachers draw inspiration.

7.1 **Time and Participatory Factors**

When the Canadian CUSO English language specialists arrived in Havana in January 1972 they understood that they would be working with about eighty engineering school graduate students per course who required English for the Master's Degree programme being conducted by Canadian professors.

The goal was clear: to provide the students, all graduate engineers, with competence in the English language so that they could understand, speak to and write for their Canadian professors.

The specialists had been chosen for their experience as ESL teachers in Canada, and were essentially practitioners who, in keeping with the times in North America, had been schooled in a structural audiolingual approach to language learning.

They were eager, however, to break with the rigid pattern practice method they had been compelled to use in Toronto and wished to experiment with the use of situational texts to exemplify grammatical structures as well as other techniques more directly related to the students' real linguistic needs.

They looked to a situational approach because they believed it to be the most advanced approach yet developed. They were unaware of Dell Hymes' only recently published paper 'On Communicative Competence' (1972) with its view of language as social interaction. Nor did they know of H.G. Widdowson's early definition of communicative competence (1972A) as "the ability to interpret discourse whether the emphasis is on productive or receptive behaviour", nor of the growing interest in the functions of language by other British linguists such as Wilkins (1972) and Halliday (1973).

Despite their scant contact with the trends in Applied Linguistics that were appearing on the world scene as the ISPJAE Project got under way, the Canadians, because of their own past experiences in teaching different ethnic groups, were sensitized to the need for thematic and lexical materials with which students could personally identify. Moreover, all of them were aware that the courses in Cuba had to be geared to men and women who

would have to understand and communicate quite specific engineering-related concepts. In that sense, they intuitively accepted the fact that they must deal with the functions of language in their materials by conveying to the students authentic English that took into account the use and purpose to which it would be put.

With these needs in mind, the Canandians began developing their materials from week to week as the first course progressed. By the end of the third course and their second year in Cuba, the author and another specialist decided that part of the product of their work, with improvements, could be incorporated into a book. The result was **English on the Tip of Your Tongue** (Hunter and Kainola 1974).

The new text, published in Canada in July 1974, was visually attractive inasmuch as a Cuban artist, renowned for his animated films, did the drawings. The dialogues, while not incorporating technical terms, used Cuban engineering students as protagonists. Although the situations were 'authentic' in the sense that they were related to the Cuban graduate engineering students' lives, the text was essentially designed to teach the basic grammatical structures of the language.

When the ISPJAE Project was in its early stage, the so-called Tabriz Project was just getting under way in Iran.

A comparison of the two projects throws light on the importance of the time and participatory factors in English teacher-training programmes in Third World nations.

Twenty British English teachers were involved in the Tabriz Project which lasted from late 1972 to 1976, far more foreign specialists than worked on the ISPJAE project. But, according to Colin Barron (1), who helped conceive and develop the project while teaching at the University of Tabriz in Iran, the three years allotted to it were not sufficient to meet its ambitious goals.

The major success of the Tabriz Project was the preparation of materials which were later published in the Longman **Nucleus** series. Unlike **English on the Tip of Your Tongue**, which did not go beyond a structural-situational approach, the **Nucleus** series used a more advanced functional-notional approach with which the specialists in Cuba were not yet familiar.

While advanced in its conceptual content, the **Nucleus** series, which was to include both first and second-level components, was never terminated: not all the books in the first level were completed and the second level was never developed at all.

Barron believes that the project could have been

completed if local teachers had been involved from the beginning in teaching and writing the materials. As it was, when the team of foreign specialists left after three years, there was nobody capable of seeing the project through to its conclusion. What is more, Barron doubts that the completed first-level materials were in use six years after the project ended.

The reason for the limited use of the series was due, Barron believes, to the fact that the Iranians did not participate in either the writing or teaching of the materials, and therefore did not assimilate them as an integral part of their own experience.

The "dissipation phenomenon," where earnest effort on the part of foreign specialists vanishes upon their departure, was also manifest in the case of an earlier project at ISPJAE. British Council linguist, Jean Dodds, arrived at ISPJAE in 1969 to promote the use of the TV series, **Walter and Connie**. Only one Cuban teacher in the department was assigned to work with her. When she left Cuba after two months, little interest in pursuing the project was shown by other department members and the materials were relegated to a drawer where they gathered dust over the years. (2)

In its first stages, the ISPJAE Project was similar to the Tabriz experience in that the written classroom

materials (including **English on the Tip of Your Tongue**) were the work solely of foreign specialists.

In contrast to the Tabriz project, however, two Cuban EFL teachers observed the use of the materials and then, under the guidance of the foreign specialists, taught with them in the postgraduate programme.

Both Canadians and Cubans, with an optimism born of zealousness and inexperience, harboured expectations that the two Cuban teachers would be ready at the end of three years, not only to teach with prepared materials, but also to develop their own materials and take over the job of training other teachers in the preparation of courses for postgraduate engineering students. As time passed, however, it became clear that this was not the case: the Cuban teachers would require more formal training in teaching methodology and course design than that which they had received through observation of classes, and unstructured discussions with the Canadian specialists in the course of using the materials themselves.

It would be logical to conjecture that if all the CUSO co-operants had returned to Canada in 1975 at the end of the three-year Phase I, the Cubans would have found it impossible to generate their own materials along the same or more advanced lines.

Interestingly, in Nepal, between 1979 and 1982, foreign specialists could boast of more lasting results. The Nepal Project -- according to Colin Barron who worked in both Tabriz and Nepal -- took advantage of the lessons learned in the earlier Tabriz Project.

The Nepal Project was concerned with the development of a course, "English for Medical and Nursing Students," by a team of four: two British EFL specialists, a Canadian nurse who helped with the scientific content, and a Nepalese English teacher. In this case, not only did a Nepalese teacher work directly with the specialists in writing the materials but other Nepalese taught these materials in the classroom and provided constant feedback as to their effectiveness.

In the case of the Nepal Project, the "dissipation phenomenon" did not take place when the foreign specialists left. Nepalese teachers not only continued to use the materials but also went on to develop their own under the guidance of the Nepalese who had participated in the materials-writing project with the foreigners.

If the aims of the ISPJAE Project had remained limited to preparing a small group of graduate engineering students for their Master's Degree programme under Canadian professors, then it is quite possible that the two Cuban

EFL teachers could have successfully continued the work by themselves had they been involved from the beginning in the writing of materials, as was the case in Nepal.

Following Phase I, however, the goals of the programme at ISPJAE became much more ambitious and included the training of other teachers.

Before all but one of the team of Canadian specialists left Cuba in July 1975 at the end of Phase I, they had given a professional development course in Methodology to Cuban English teachers. The real value of this course resided in the fact that it was the first time that English teachers from different branches of the Cuban educational system came together and exchanged experiences. What was clear was that all of them were eager and impatient to discover and put into practice different and more effective methods and classroom techniques than the ones they were then using.

This new awareness of the pressing needs of the English language teaching profession at different institutions and at different academic levels in Cuba led to a broadening of the aims of the ISPJAE English programme. What had begun as a programme for postgraduate engineers broadened into the wider challenge of upgrading Cuban EFL specialists so that they could develop materials, train their colleagues and give classes to students at

the postgraduate as well as the undergraduate levels. This not only affected the engineering school but also spilled over into other branches of education in Cuba.

The new objectives were never systematically spelled out in official documents. In keeping with the somewhat spontaneous manner of doing many things in Cuba -- guerrilla fashion as it were -- the ISPJAE English language project defined itself as it went forward in the heat of each academic year's battles.

The motivation for change partially rested on the fact that the Canadians' pursuit of innovative approaches to meet the challenge at hand whetted the appetite of some Cuban English language teachers and university officials.

The decisive moment in this process was the introduction of a communicative approach during the 1975-76 academic year, following the author's participation in the First Summer Institute for The Teaching of English for Science and Technology at the University of Washington. Crucial also was the enhanced view of communicative language teaching which the author brought back to Cuba upon completion of graduate studies at the University of Edinburgh during the 1977-78 academic year.

Another high point was the visit to Cuba in March 1977 of Dr. Patrick Allen, on leave from the University of

Edinburgh at the time, and teaching at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in Toronto. During his one-week stay, Dr. Allen gave lectures and directed workshops for Cuban English teachers and policy-makers from the most important ministries and educational institutions on the island.

Chapter Three of this thesis relates the hundreds of hours spent on experimental programmes for students, teacher-training courses, talks, seminars, and workshops during the 1975-77 Phase II which all had, as their central focus, the newly emerging communicative approach.

It was an important period of spreading the new ideas beyond ISPJAE to other institutions such as the National Centre for Scientific Research, the University of Havana, and the Higher Institute of Medical Sciences in Havana.

The sheer numbers of students in English language programmes, the proportionately large number of teachers needed to carry them out, the disparity of the teachers' knowledge of and academic background in the language and language theory, and the growing interest in finding more effective ways of teaching precluded any short-term results.

It was never possible to accurately predict how long it would take to introduce the more advanced communicative approach into the Cuban education system as a whole.

Great advances in this direction were, however, made during the last seven years of the ten-year period described in this thesis.

But even years later, in the 1987-88 academic year, a visiting Canadian ELT specialist on a one-year sabbatical leave from Glendon College of York University in Toronto, Dr. Neil Naiman, noted that certain important sectors of the Cuban educational system still resisted the introduction of communicative language teaching and remained mired in traditional audiolingual methods in spite of the fact that most Cuban English teachers and academic authorities acknowledged the poor results which they were producing. (3)

The Cuban experience demonstrated that there are objective frontiers that cannot be crossed until the time is ripe. This "readiness factor" implies a sensitivity on the part of the specialist as to how far and how fast one can proceed in a process of change at a given moment and under given circumstances. A striking example in the Cuban experience was the failure to put into practice Dr. Patrick Allen's recommendations that a unified EST research and development unit be set up in Cuba to produce and test teaching materials, and that a two-way relationship be established with foreign institutions in the field of English language training.

Eleven years after Dr. Allen's recommendations, the Canadian adviser, Dr. Neil Naiman, offered similar advice exclusively for English language teaching in the field of tourism. Due to a now more favorable "readiness factor" on the part of policy-makers, there is a good likelihood that these will be put into effect before the end of the 1980's. (4)

One important lesson to be drawn from the entire project is that the "dissipation phenomenon" can be prevented only if sufficient time is allotted to the training of local teachers. The length of time depends, of course, on the circumstances but, whatever these may be, hit-and-run operations on the part of foreign specialists seldom bring enduring results.

7.2 Counterparts

Another lesson is that one of the best ways for foreign specialists to prepare local personnel is to foster a **counterpart relationship.**

The cornerstone of the decade-long Cuban project was, indeed, the counterpart relationship. This might be likened to an apprenticeship programme in which the apprentice finally becomes a journeyman prepared to take over full responsibility for the job.

From the very beginning of the Canadian participation in 1972 in the English programmes at ISPJAE, Cuban teachers were involved as counterparts. The Canadians can take little credit for this arrangement as it was the Cuban authorites who insisted on it.

Although the Canadian teachers could see the logic of the Cuban insistance on counterparts, they at first failed to develop a structured and systematic training programme for them. It was only towards the end of the 1972-75 period that a consciousness about this awakened.

One explanation for the failure to involve the counterparts more actively in the design and writing of materials during Phase I was the heavy work schedule of the Canadians which left them little time for attending to the needs of the Cubans: in addition to designing and writing the teaching materials as the course progressed, the Canadian specialists also had twenty hours of direct teaching a week.

The belief that the counterparts could somehow absorb the necessary knowledge and experience to be course designers and materials writers by sitting in on the Canadians' classes and then subsequently using the new materials in their own classes proved erroneous. The lesson from this was that one cannot depend on spontaneity and osmosis to achieve the desired outcome.

The level of experience, competence and skill of those chosen as counterparts should determine the kind of programme to be developed for them. In the case of English for the Master's Degree programme at ISPJAE, the counterparts had been taken from the undergraduate programme where their experience had been largely limited to the teaching of reading comprehension. Their training and experience had not prepared them to deal adequately with graduate engineers who required a programme of integrated skills with more sophisticated activities, and materials related to their specialities. These limitations on the part of the local teachers had to be taken into consideration at every step of the project.

The ISPJAE experience showed that the choice of counterparts, with sufficent experience and eagerness to learn, as well as the capacity to assimilate new ideas and then convey those ideas to others, is also an important element for success.

At ISPJAE, the selection of the counterparts was made by the English department itself and in general the choices were well founded. But it did occur to the foreign specialists that, in projects such as the one they were involved in, objective criteria for selecting ideal counterparts could be determined. Whether or not foreign

specialists in other countries would be permitted to apply their own standards would depend on the given situation. In Cuba, their opinion was not sought.

The Cuban experience demonstrated that in order to ensure success, mutual confidence and respect are indispensable. It pointed to the need for an intimate working relationship between the foreign specialist and the local teachers, free of paternalism and elitism. The fact that the CUSO teachers had left well-paying jobs in Canada and received the same modest salaries -- in Cuban pesos -- as their Cuban counterparts helped to break down barriers and establish rapport. While it would be unfair to expect foreign specialists everywhere to accept this practice, in the case of Cuba, it undoubtedly helped to create a bond between the specialists and the teachers they worked with.

It also became clear that if mutual confidence is to be established between the foreign and local specialists, the visitor must be truly ready to share his knowledge willingly, and in many cases under conditions of shortages and absence of material goods -- as was the case in Cuba -- even make available his own personal resources, such as office supplies and reference books.

A case in point was the 1980-82 field study involving 1600 undergraduate engineering students annually. This

required that a minimum of 10,000 pages of materials be run off fortnightly over a period of some seven or eight months in each of the academic years.

In order to ensure this, the specialist had to personally obtain dittoes and stencils which the Institute could not provide, and because of the lack of secretarial help, do the typing herself. Then, because of the shortage of university vehicles, she had to take the typed stencils and dittoes in her own car along with 25 reams of paper to another school that had duplicating equipment, and later pick up the finished materials. Finally, she had to staple the materials together (with her own stapler and staples), and afterwards distribute them. This is just one example of the many problems that would not have been solved (and which would have jeopardized the field study) had it not been for the determination and efforts of the foreign specialist.

This kind of evident interest and concern helps to establish credibility with the local teachers, and hopefully creates an awareness on their part that effective results can only be obtained through good work habits and organization.

7.3 Overcoming Resistance

Many Cuban English teachers and educational policy-makers

during the course of the ISPJAE Project would have agreed with Carlyle's words, "Change, indeed is painful; yet ever needful". For them, the chance to replace ineffective methods justified the hurdles that had to be overcome in order to implant a new approach.

The attitude of some, however, was more in consonance with Ruskin's observation, "Good to the heels the well-worn slippers feel." While, in many cases, recognizing that the traditional methods of teaching English in Cuba were producing only mediocre results, they clung to those methods because they felt comfortable and familiar with them.

One of the arguments used to obstruct the introduction of a communicative approach to English language teaching at the secondary school and undergraduate university level was the contention that discourse analysis is conceptually too complex for any but postgraduate university students. Another was that books like the **Focus** series taught science rather than English.

It soon became evident that resistance to the new approach lay in some teachers' own fear of being unable to deal effectively in the classroom with a new dimension to language analysis. This then led to the rationalization: if the teacher is not comfortable with the new ideas, how could he expect his students, with

almost no background in the English language, to understand them? Following the introduction of a communicative approach in the autumn of 1975, one of the major challenges became that of overcoming this very fear.

The signs of doubt about a general application of the approach did not manifest themselves immediately. Innovative materials were introduced smoothly into the postgraduate programmes at ISPJAE, the medical school in Havana (ISCM-H) and the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNIC) during the 1975-76 academic year; experimentation with the new ideas continued at these centres the following year as well, with close collaboration between the teachers and course designers at the three institutions.

Resistance at ISPJAE only arose towards the end of the 1976-77 academic year. It began after Dr. Allen's visit and became more defined following a course given to the undergraduate teachers by their colleagues from the postgraduate programme under the supervision of the Canadian specialist.

The opposition to applying a communicative approach to the undergraduate division came mainly from the head of the Language Department who had been appointed to this position in 1976. It is interesting to note that, as the

person vested with the greatest authority in the department, he was expected to establish a counterpart relationship with the Canadian specialist. It is signifcant that he never did so.

On the eve of the author's departure in July 1977 for sixteen months of graduate work and research in Great Britain, it was clear that the future of the approach at ISPJAE was uncertain.

By that time, however, thanks to the dissemination of information on the part of the Canadian specialist and Dr. Allen and to increasing support from local teachers, the new approach had established a foot-hold in Cuba.

It is fair to assume, nonetheless, that had the Canadian specialist not returned to Cuba upon completion of her M.Sc. in Edinburgh, the experimental work at ISPJAE would have been dealt a telling blow. The postgraduate programme at ISPJAE, based on the approach, was already being phased out, and given the intractable opposition of the department head, it is highly unlikely that a communicative approach would have been used in the new textbooks for undergraduate engineering students in the early 1980's.

It is also possible that the appointment in 1978 of the ISPJAE department head as chairman of the newly-created National Sub-commission for the Teaching of English at

the university level could have resulted in his thwarting any attempt to introduce a communicative approach into the island's universities and other institutes of higher learning.

As it turned out, a communicative approach had been firmly established at the medical school in Havana, which was not under the jurisdiction of the National Sub-Commission for English.

The head of the English Department at the medical school had become one of the nation's most resolute defenders of the new approach. By the 1977-78 academic year, the medical school pioneered the introduction of the approach into its undergraduate programme through the use of **English in Basic Medical Science** of the **Focus** series.

The award for graduate work in Edinburgh, granted by the International Development Research Council of Canada, stipulated that the author return to Cuba to continue the communicative approach project at ISPJAE. This, along with a sense of responsibility to the Cuban English teachers developed during her five years in Cuba, determined her decision to re-engage in the struggle.

The sixteen months in Great Britain had strengthened the author's knowledge of the communicative approach and prepared her better for any opposition.

In the spirit of scientific inquiry, the question could be asked, "What kind of authority could a foreign specialist expect to pit against the formal, institutionalized authority of somebody like his or her immediate superior in the host country?"

The answer could only be moral authority based on respect for the specialist's knowledge, integrity, and dedication.

First of all, in order for a foreign specialist to win intellectual credibility he must be thoroughly familiar and comfortable with the trends and methodologies which he is advocating.

Numerous conversations with Cuban teachers revealed that a foreign specialist also earns respect by his enthusiasm and equanimity, his ability to unite a group of teachers and to bring out the best in each no matter what their difficulties and limitations, and his willingness to share his knowledge. The Cuban teachers also stated that he must be principled and diplomatic. This precludes such traits as argumentativeness or arrogance. (5)

While all the aforementioned are essential qualities, the Cuban experience proved that another more pragmatic ingredient is necessary: support from influential academics and policy-makers.

The ISPJAE Project indicated, however, that in the final analysis, skepticism is best combatted by demonstrating, through **practice**, that the new ideas are more effective and motivating than the old ones.

An important factor, then, was the 1980-82 ISPJAE field study which involved 1600 students and 24 English teachers during each of the two years.

The field study disproved the allegation that a discoursal approach would be too complex conceptually for undergraduate students. On the contrary, the students were enthusiastic about the greater intellectual challenge which the materials presented. A survey taken among the nineteen first-year teachers who taught the experimental materials showed that, in their opinion, the new approach enhanced student motivation and class participation and was more successful in improving their linguistic skills.

The practical results of the field study were that a communicative approach was adopted in the writing of the new English-language textbooks for second-year undergraduate engineers throughout the country.

The conclusion drawn from this was that a concurrence of conditions is necessary to bring about change. The key factor was the Cuban teachers' growing familiarity

with the new concepts and their mass participation in the field study where they applied the new approach and saw the results in practice.

The teachers' participation was multi-faceted: they helped in the writing of the teaching materials, in the preparation of teaching aids, in the writing of the study notes for the students, in the preparation of experimental class tests, and in the statistical analyses of the final results of the controlled matched-group experiment carried out in the second year of the field study (1981-82).

This broadly-based involvement in all major aspects of the study gave the teachers a strong sense of identity with its aims. The fact that there were regular fortnightly methodological meetings with all the teachers during which they made criticisms and suggestions, and that their tasks were carried out in teams of two or three, rather than individually, also proved to be important motivating factors.

It is interesting to speculate what might have been the ultimate outcome if a controlled experiment had been carried out at ISPJAE in the 1979-80 academic year -- as had been originally proposed by the Vice-Rector of Academic Studies -- with only four groups of students and the author herself, and possibly one Cuban colleague, as

the teachers.

In retrospect, it seems clear that even if excellent results had been obtained in favour of the experimental materials, they would not have had the same decisive impact as the 1980-82 field study in which 24 teachers and 1600 first-year engineering students in each of the two academic years had actively participated.

The communicative approach was attacked on the basis of more than its pedagogical efficacy. At one point, doubts were raised about its ideological acceptability.

Suspicion was aroused by those who stressed that the approach had originated in capitalist countries and was being promoted in Cuba by foreigners from capitalist countries, whose motives were possibly questionable. On a more philosophical level, there were intimations that the new approach somehow ran counter to the Marxist Theory of Knowledge.

It was difficult for the foreigners to combat these attacks, but fortunately, influential Cubans with a command of the subject believed that these arguments were invalid. Some publicly challenged the allegations, and one Cuban English teacher rebutted the charges in a paper given at a language teaching conference in the spring of 1982. The paper won first prize for the best

piece of research. (6)

Upon reflection, one might conjecture that the persecution of the "sect of advocates" of the new ideas only strengthened their resolve to persist and supplant the old. (7)

Another ideological pitfall that had to be avoided was that of reflecting or extolling what the Cubans called "bourgeois ideas." The specialists were quickly alerted to the fact that some of the packaged English courses imported from Great Britain and the United States were being strongly criticized because they depicted social settings, relationships and events that were considered "bourgeois."

This never became an issue with materials used by the Canadian specialists. **English on the Tip of Your Tongue** depicted realistic Cuban situations, and the other texts, both imported courses such as the **Focus** series, and those that were specially written, were scientific in content with no objectionable social or political content.

This lesson probably has validity for many teachers in other underdeveloped or developing countries, i.e. that their work will be hampered or come to nought if the materials used in courses clash with generally accepted social and political biases. The lesson could be easily extended to religious beliefs where, for instance, it

would be impermissible in some Islamic nations to have a character in an English language text savouring a pork roast.

Another lesson was that peer pressure for change could be a potent force in convincing colleagues. For example, the Cuban counterparts at ISPJAE who worked with the author in the postgraduate programme became influential in disseminating and promoting the new ideas and in engendering a positive response among other teachers, both at their own institute and at other centres of learning. This facilitated the acceptance and adoption of the new ideas.

As a consequence of this, after 1975, the Cuban counterparts were almost always given the responsibility of conducting the methodological meetings with their colleagues, with the foreign adviser available to assist in any way. Thus, even some of those who were bitten by the bugaboo of partiality, because they had a vested interest in maintaining the status quo, softened somewhat under peer pressure.

7.4 Summing Up

These conclusions have explored the strategy and tactics which facilitated the introduction and development of a communicative approach to English language teaching in

Cuba in the 1970's and early 80's.

It is doubtful, however, whether those responsible for guiding the day-to-day work could have spelled out these tactics and strategy in the course of the ten years under consideration. For the most part, specific challenges dictated the attitudes assumed and the practical steps taken to overcome obstacles and make progress towards the desired goals.

Summing up, the crucial lessons of the ten-year experience in this regard are the following:

:Change requires time -- The length of time during which foreign specialists work with local teachers is all important for preparing people for change and for consolidating it. This will depend on the specific situation, but, whatever the conditions, short-term projects are not likely to achieve lasting results.

:Perseverance and fortitude are corollaries of the time factor.

:Conditions have to be propitious for change to be lasting -- The "readiness factor" is decisive; that is, the moment has to be opportune pedagogically, psychologically and even politically (in the sense of departmental and academic politics) to introduce new ideas. Only then can the "dissipation phenomenon" be

thwarted.

:A counterpart relationship is highly effective -- This permits the transference of knowledge and skills to the local teachers who will remain after the foreign specialists leave. It also helps to "naturalize" the new ideas and thus make them more acceptable.

:The type of counterpart relationship is all important -- It has to be active and not passive. This means that the foreign specialists must involve the local teachers as quickly and as deeply as possible in all aspects of a project and should provide a planned training programme for them.

:The selection of competent counterparts is essential -- Counterparts are needed who have practical experience in the classroom, an adequate background in the language, and knowledge of certain methodological techniques. Another requisite must be their potential for absorbing and disseminating new ideas. These qualities are necessary for the future continuity and development of the changes once the foreign specialists leave.

:Peer pressure can play a positive role -- The acceptance of new trends by the counterparts and most of their colleagues will help to convince other teachers and policy-makers.

:The foreign specialists must be realistic about what is feasible in terms of material and human resources -- There is no point in developing programmes that require resources which are not available (e.g. tape recorders) or which cannot be purchased because the funds are equally unavailable. Nor should programmes be considered which require techniques which the teachers are not trained to use. In either case, the effort will have been made in vain. In Cuba, the "expanded syllabus" was a good solution for dealing with lack of resources and hard currency to obtain them.

:The foreign specialists have to demonstrate leadership qualities -- These include the ability to unite a group and bring out the best in each regardless of limitations. Contributing qualities in this regard are tactfulness and respect for the local teachers free of paternalistic attitudes.

:The foreign specialists must be sensitive to and respectful of the generally accepted social and cultural biases of the community. -- Teaching materials which contain ideas or values that run counter to the accepted norm will be rejected, no matter how methodologically superior or advanced.

:The foreign specialists must establish intellectual credibility -- To overcome skepticism and conservative

opposition, it is necessary to show expertise and to demonstrate, in practice, the superiority of the new ideas.

:Openness and candour on the part of the foreign specialists are important -- The sharing of ideas, knowledge and even resources, where necessary, help to gain the esteem required for carrying out the work. Also significant in this respect is the willingness to contribute time and energy to solve day-to-day problems that may arise in a Third World country.

:Native speaker specialists from abroad can be the window on the world of new ideas -- In the case of Cuba, because of its isolation from the English-speaking world for both political and economic reasons, foreign specialists played a fundamental role in familiarizing Cubans with the latest developments in English language teaching. These specialists included the resident Canadian team-members and visitors such as Dr. Patrick Allen.

EPILOGUE: 1988

The vantage point of 1988, six years after the ten-year period described in this thesis, permits a more objective evaluation of the efforts to develop a communicative approach to English language teaching in Cuba and whether or not those efforts led to anything really substantial.

When we examine the widespread use of the approach in various English language programmes, it becomes clear that it is now well and truly accepted at the university level in Cuba, particularly in medicine, engineering, tourism, and pedagogy. It has yet to be introduced at lower levels of education, but there are indications that this may occur by the end of the century.

In the field of medicine, by 1988, Cuba's medical schools, with 30,000 students and 483 English teachers, had gone further than any other institution on the island in the development of the approach. They had replaced the two-year reading courses, still in use in other institutions of higher learning, with five-year integrated oral courses using a communicative language teaching methodology.

As an aside, the transition from reading to oral courses in the medical schools came about in a way probably unique to Cuba. In June 1983, an English teacher at the Higher Institute of Medical Sciences in Havana, Samuel

Toirac, spoke at a faculty meeting about the need for medical students to learn spoken English.

Toirac, along with one of his colleagues, Victor Wotzkow, had begun an experiment using the British **Kernel** series with six groups of students in September 1982 and was enthusiastic about the student response to the materials. This experiment, however, had been interrupted in mid-stream by the head of his department who claimed that the **Kernel** series was full of "ideological diversionist" ideas.

Cuban president Fidel Castro, who was at the faculty meeting in June 1983 -- in itself, a comment on the Cuban emphasis on education -- supported Toirac's suggestion that an experiment in an oral approach be carried out in all five years of the medical school programme throughout the country. The argument in favour of such a change was that future doctors needed to be able to communicate orally in English as many of them would later go overseas where they would need to speak the language.

Questions then arose about the ideological suitability of the **Kernel** series, and the matter finally went to the highest level of authority in Cuba, the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party, for approval. (1)

In 1988 these five-year English courses for medical

students were mainly using the British version of the **Kernel** series, but had also introduced the BBC course **Medically Speaking** as well as other materials with a medical content for use in the fourth and fifth years.

This change of objective in the English programmes at Cuba's medical schools points up the fact that language teaching in all countries is sensitive to changing socio-political situations. By the late-1970's, Cuba had begun to play an important role in providing technical aid to other Third World countries, particularly to African and Islamic nations where English is a lingua franca. By 1988, there were Cuban doctors and other medical personnel in 35 countries around the world, and the language they required was spoken English in which to communicate with patients, students, officials, etc.

The communicative approach has been ensured a strong base for the future in the medical schools with the development of a postgraduate professional development programme for the English teachers working with **Kernel** and the other textbooks. The on-going two-year course is essentially a master's degree programme which provides the teachers with a solid basis for understanding and applying a communicative approach. It is also hoped that some of the graduates will be provided with the necessary background to undertake the writing of new textbooks to replace **Kernel**. (2)

The programme was initiated during the 1987-88 academic year for teachers from the island's twenty-one medical faculties and four dental faculties. As well, a limited number of places are available for teachers from other centres of higher learning.

There are three stages in the programme.

The first stage, a ten-month distance learning course, is concerned with communicative language teaching concepts and methodology related to the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The teachers are asked to continually relate what they study to their own experiences in using the **Kernel** series or other textbooks and courses. Seven textbooks are used.(3)

The second stage, for a rigorously selected group of teachers completing stage one, encompasses a full-time eighteen-week session offered in Havana. The courses, given entirely in English, offer a background in fields from which the communicative approach has derived much of its substance: Discourse Analysis, Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics, as well as courses in Research Techniques, Methods and Methodologies, and Computers in Language Teaching. During the 1987-88 course, three native English-speaking specialists taught in this stage, one of whom produced the basic coursebook, **Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching** (Moore: 1988).

The third and final stage is concerned with the writing of a thirty-page dissertation. Upon acceptance, the students are granted an "English language teaching specialist" degree.

In addition to the five-year programme for medical students and the master's-level programme for their teachers, extremely flexible 240-hour courses for graduate doctors are now being offered in the postgraduate section of the medical school in Havana to meet the specialized needs of Cuban doctors. Many are to go overseas: some to teach medicine; others to practice medicine; still others to attend medical conferences. Finally, some need a course to prepare for a state exam in English, one of the requisites for a doctoral degree.

The very first ESP-type course for doctors was given in 1976, and over the years, the content and methodology has been refined and improved as the teachers gain experience and theoretical knowledge. Moreover, a bank of listening, reading, and writing materials has been built up with the objective in mind that all courses can eventually be tailored to the given group's special needs.

By 1988, ESP-type courses for doctors were being contemplated in all the medical and dental faculties throughout the country, but it was generally recognized that the teachers needed special training in giving

courses that did not follow a prescribed syllabus and printed textbook. It is hoped that graduates of the "master's" programme will have the necessary background and training for such a task.

By 1988, other centres of higher learning had developed programmes with courses using a communicative approach, but none had as complete or extensive a programme as that at the medical school with its undergraduate and postgraduate sections and master's programme for its teachers and future textbook-writers.

All first-year undergraduate students at Cuba's higher educational institutions which come under the aegis of MES (this includes engineering students but not medical students) were using textbooks which contain certain elements of a communicative approach. (4)

The methodology for these textbooks, **Effective Reading in English**, had been influenced by the field study at ISPJAE but even more so by the materials studied in the courses "Integrated Oral Practice" and "Writing" offered at ISPJAE in the 1979-80 academic year, most notably J.B. Heaton's, **Studying in English.**

The textbooks for second-year engineering and architecture students in use in 1988 were entitled **Reading in Technology, Books I and II.** Written between 1982 and 1984 they drew on concepts underlying the

materials developed for the field study. (5)

Although the field study materials were not intended for use once the experiment was over, in 1988 these same materials were being used at ISPJAE in special reading courses for first-year engineering students who had studied Russian rather than English in secondary school.

Another area where a communicative approach had made great inroads by 1988 was that of the Cuban tourist industry which is one of Cuba's main sources of hard currency and where the English language is considered a necessity for those working in its various branches. For this reason, by 1988, the Cuban government had decided that English language teaching within the industry must be given top priority.

The director of the English programme at the Centre for Tourist Studies in Havana, Antonio Irizar, and the vice-director, Ada Chiappy Jhones, first attended a course on the communicative approach in 1980 and had subsequently experimented with its use in special short-term oral courses for chambermaids and bellhops using materials specially developed by themselves. During that period, which corresponded to the 1980-82 ISPJAE field study, a great deal of co-operation and collaboration existed between these teachers in tourism and the teachers at the schools of engineering and medicine.

Later, Professor Chiappy used the American oral series, **Spectrum** while teaching part-time at MINCEX and for two years while working at the university in Luanda, Angola. In 1987, with the decision to adopt a communicative approach to all the English language programmes in tourism, **Spectrum** was introduced into the numerous schools across the country, where a total of 100 teachers are employed. (6)

During the 1987-88 academic year, coinciding with this large-scale introduction of **Spectrum**, a Canadian ELT professor on sabbatical leave from York University in Toronto, Dr. Neil Naiman, helped to ensure the effective use of the series through regular teacher-training seminars held at the Centre's schools.

Although finding the commercially-available series adequate for a start in its endeavour to provide more effective language training for employees in tourism, Dr. Naiman suggested that the Centre develop its own materials to fit the needs of different jobs within the industry. He also urged that an on-going systematic programme for training teachers in classroom practice and materials-writing be implemented as soon as possible.

By August 1988, the Centre, with the help of Dr. Naiman, had set in motion the mechanism to develop such a relationship of collaboration with Glendon College at

York University and Ryerson Polytechnic Institute, both in Toronto. (7)

Significantly, this link between a "textbook-writing or teacher-training project in Cuba ..." and an "appropriate University Department in Canada ..." is precisely what Dr. Patrick Allen recommended in the report he made on his visit to Cuba in March 1977. (8)

Regarding the upgrading of English teachers, the Centre for Tourist Studies also plans to follow the example set by the medical schools to establish a master's-level specialization plan to equip the teachers with a solid grounding in communicative theory and methodology. The first phase of this two-year programme is scheduled to begin in 1989.

Perhaps one of the most significant breakthroughs in the introduction of the communicative approach has been its acceptance by the Higher Pedogogical Institute for Foreign Languages (ISPLE). With a 1988-89 enrolment of 1200 students in its five-year English programme, this institute has the task of training English teachers for all secondary schools in the city of Havana (Grades 7 to 12). Moreover, it is a "centro rector", or adminitrative centre, which means that English teacher training programmes at the pedagogical institutes in other provinces apply the programmes developed by ISPLE.

ISPLE and the English Language Departments at the Pedagogical Institutes, which come under its aegis, began using the **Spectrum** series in September 1987 as part of a two-year programme for the retraining of Russian teachers.(9) This retraining course gave such good results that **Spectrum** was then incorporated into the regular five-year programme for English teachers, beginning in the 1988-89 academic year.

In addition, beginning in September 1989 a new textbook, written by two teachers at ISPLE, Faustino Soto and Ada Jhones, will also be included in the regular programme. This textbook draws heavily on the approach developed by Abbs and Freebairn in their **Strategies Series.** (10)

The greatest impact of the communicative approach has in fact been in the introduction of oral courses in such major Cuban sectors as medicine and tourism as well as in specialized centres like the Ministry of Foreign Commerce with the application of a communicative methodolgy which includes role-playing, simulation, pair work, group work, information-gap type exercises.

While oral courses in Cuban higher education have best exploited communicative language teaching and most influenced the teachers, courses in reading, based on a discoursal approach, are still widely used. There is

general agreement among Cuban teachers that these courses represent an improvement over previous university reading courses. But at the same time, they say, the course content and methodology, devised by Cuban textbook-writing teams, have not succeeded in motivating the students to the fullest. A consensus has grown that they would like to see the introduction of oral courses where they do not presently exist. This desire coincides with the wishes of the majority of students.

This criterion leads us to speculate that by the turn of the century oral courses or a spoken element will be increasingly introduced where solely reading courses now exist in higher education. This goal has not only been expressed by teachers and students alike, but also by some leading policy-makers. (11)

That the communicative approach will continue to consolidate itself in Cuba over the next decade is ensured by the fact that an ever greater number of teachers are being exposed to it, both in teacher training courses, such as those being given at the medical school, in tourism, and at ISPLE, as well as in classroom practice with the use of **Kernel** and **Spectrum.**

The main field where most doubts exist about the future of the communicative approach is at the secondary school level, although there is general acknowledgement that the

audiolingual approach now in use is producing mediocre results. The most overt manifestation of this fact is that students entering the university have an insufficient knowledge of the English language and virtually no ability to speak.

There seems to be a divided opinion, however, as to whether the introduction of a communicative approach in secondary schools is feasible. The arguments against the possibility include the fact that English classes in secondary schools are very large, that over 5000 teachers (12) have already been trained in the old approach, and that the material resources for a communicative oral approach, such as tape recorders, would represent an exorbitant hard currency expenditure.

Professor Madeleine Monte of ISPLE believes, however, that the training of hundreds of secondary school teachers at her institute by means of a communicative approach beginning in the 1988-89 academic year will provide the human resources necessary for introducing the approach. Although she explained that new English language textbooks for secondary schools using the traditional approach will soon be published and will have to be used for five years, she emphasized that the majority of policy-makers at MINED are in favour of the introduction of a communicative approach but do not think it would be feasible before the mid-1990's, at the

earliest. (13)

In ending this epilogue it is important to point out that although many hurdles have been overcome there remains an enormous amount of work yet to be done. The greatest challenge is in the field of teacher training and professional development. It would be misleading, for example, to leave the reader of this thesis with the impression that by 1988 the English teachers already using a communicative approach had mastered it and its concomitant methodology.

Better teacher training courses, more native English-speaker specialist help, textbooks which meet the specific needs of the learners, and links with foreign English speaking institutions are all imperative needs if such an approach is to reach its full potential in Cuba.

One fact, in the author's opinion, that augurs well for future of English language teaching in Cuba is that most of those responsible for directing its destiny have grasped the essence of the communicative approach and are themselves capable of carrying on the process of constant improvement to a successful conclusion.

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APPENDIX A

NOTES

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

(1) The Higher Polytechnic Institute José Antonio Echeverría (ISPJAE - Instituto Superior Politécnico José Antonio Echeverría) was called CUJAE (Ciudad Universitaria José Antonio Echeverría) until 1976 while it was still the Faculty of Technology of the University of Havana. In 1976, a new Ministry of Higher Education was created and, at that time, CUJAE became a separate entity directly responsible to the new ministry. Throughout this thesis, this institution will be referred to as ISPJAE regardless of the period of its history under discussion.

(2) According to the **Anuario Estadistico 1986** published by the Cuban State Committee on Statistics, the initial enrolment in Engineering and Technology in the 1985-86 academic year was 32,450. The number of students graduating as engineers in 1986 was 4,229.

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(1) Quoted from a speech by Fidel Castro, reported in the newspaper, **Revolución**, May 11, 1959.

(2) Leonardo Sorzano Jorrin, **Manual del Maestro de Inglés**, Cultural S.A., Habana, no publication date, p. 11.

(3) Ibid, p.11.

(4) In pre-revolutionary Cuba, the educational system was structured as follows: Grades 1 - 6 (primary education); Grades 7 - 8 (senior primary); Grades 9 - 12 (bachillerato). From the 1940's, the bachillerato was five years (Grades 9 - 13).

(5) There were also private high schools. In the 1955-56 academic year, the last pre-revolutionary year for which official statistics are available, there were 145, with a total enrolment of 11,737. (See **Estadisticas de los centros secundarios en la Reptblica de Cuba, Curso 1955-56.** Superintendencia General de la Segunda Enseñanza, La Habana, Dec. 1956).

(6) Dr. Antich was an English teacher in a private bilingual school prior to the Revolution. From 1959 until her retirement in 1986, she held the highest position in English language teaching in the country. At the time of her retirement, her title was "Experta de Idiomas del ICCP" (Instituto Central de Ciencias Pedagógicas).

(7) Francisco Gastón, **Short Lessons on Engineering and Architecture**, Editorial Libreria "Alma Mater", Escalinata de la Universidad de la Habana, Habana, Cuba, 1959 (fourth edition).

(8) Interview with Antonio Ronda, April 1, 1984, Havana, Cuba.

(9) **La Educación en Cuba**, Ministry of Education, Havana, Cuba, 1973, p. 15.

(10) Among the major bilingual schools in Havana were the Catholic schools: Merici Academy and American Dominicans; the Protestant schools: Candler College, Metodista Central, Buena Vista, and Cathedral School; the lay schools: Ruston Academy, Phillips School, St. George Academy, Lafayette, Columbus College, Military Business Academy, Cima School, and the commercial section of the Edison Institute.

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(11) The father of Cuban three-time Olympic heavy-weight boxing champion, Teófilo Stevenson was born on the island of Saint Vincent. Stevenson visited his father's birthplace in 1986 and while there spoke in English, which he had learned at home as a child. (Reported in **Juventud Rebelde**, Oct., 31, 1986.)

(12) Interview with Sylvia Valliciergo, Feb. 10, 1984. Sylvia Valliciergo is a retired Cuban English teacher who studied from 1936 to 1941 in a Catholic girls' school in Quebec City, Canada, where she learned both French and English. Years later after her return to Cuba, she worked in Special English Centre #32. She recounts that most of the teachers were either graduates of bilingual schools or had studied in the USA. Some were political appointees. On the whole, the courses were serious and the standard of teaching was high. In 1950, they were still using the Sorzano Jorrin series, but a few years later, they began to use the Lado and Fries **American English Series.**

(13) Interview with Marta Santo Tomás, Havana, Feb. 10, 1984. Marta Santo Tomás was a teacher at the Abraham Lincoln School and later became the 'interventor' when the revolutionary government took it over. She affirms that the Instituto Cultural Cubano-Norteamericano also gave lectures and classes on U.S. history and culture and that "the Institute was a spearhead of U.S. cultural penetration in Cuba." She states that when the government took over the Institute, it found evidence of cheques that had been sent to the Institute's director, Portel Vilà, from the United States Information Services.

(14) Interview with Frank Ibañez, Havana, January 15, 1981. Ibañez and his American wife, Agnes, returned to Cuba from the United States in the early 1950's and established a small school in Havana. He remembers that there were literally hundreds of English-speaking Cubans or Americans in Cuba who offered private English lessons.

(15) Quoted from a letter from Daniel Jones to Mercedes Sorzano de Herrera, dated August 12, 1950.

(16) Interview with Dr. Rosa Antich, Havana, Cuba, April 5, 1984.

(17) Interview with Mercedes Sorzano de Herrera, Havana, Cuba, Feb. 8, 1984.

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(18) Letter from Sorzano Jorrin to the IPA, dated Sept. 18, 1906.

(19) Letter from Daniel Jones to Mercedes Sorzano de Herrera, August 12, 1950.

(20) Interview with Mercedes Sorzano de Herrera, op. cit.

(21) **Alerta**, Dec. 2, 1940.

(22) At the time of his death in 1950, Sorzano Jorrin had just completed a textbook for the teaching of Spanish, commissioned by the University of Texas. (Interview with Mercedes Sorzano, op. cit.)

(23) Interview with Mercedes Sorzano de Herrera, op. cit. Mercedes recounted how she had accompanied her father to the USA in 1946 to gather the latest relevant information.

(24) **La Educación en Cuba**, MINED, Havana 1973, p.16.

(25) Cuban educational statistics used to include the number of classrooms (aulas), perhaps because when a teacher was hired, she or he was "given a classroom". In fact, it was notorious that many teachers were forced to buy their classrooms from corrupt officials.

(26) **La Educación en Cuba**, MINED, Havana 1973, p.17

(27) **Alfabetización, Nacionalización de la Enseñanza**, Ministerio de Educación, La Habana, 1962, p. 58. The same source cites statistics from a study carried out prior to the adoption of a social security law for private teachers in 1952. The study says there were 2139 private schools, with 10,145 teachers and 224,000 students.

(28) Cited in **La Educación en Cuba**, MINED, La Habana, January 1, 1963.

(29) See: **Obras Revolucionarias**, Imprenta Nacional, La Habana, September 26, 1960

(30) Benitez was a young black teacher taking part in the literacy campaign who was murdered by a counterrevolutionary band while living with and teaching farm families in the Escambray mountains of south-central Cuba

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(31) **Methods and Means Utilized in Cuba to Eliminate Illiteracy in Cuba**, UNESCO report, 1964.

(32) **Granma**, October 7, 1981

(33) **Juventud Rebelde**, October 28, 1981. By 1984, this figure had risen to 583,000. (Speech to the CTC Congress by Fidel Castro, Feb. 24, 1984.)

(34) The population growth rate per 1000 inhabitants rose from 18.2 in 1958, to 22.1 in 1959, and peaked at 26.4 in 1964. By 1979, it had dropped to a record low of 7.4. See **Anuario Demográfico de Cuba 1979**, Comité Estatal de Estadisticas, La Habana 1981, p.12

(35) **Anuario Estadistico de Cuba 1985**, Comité Estatal de Estadisticas, La Habana 1986, p. 487

(36) **Boletin Estadistico 1971**, Junta Central de Planificacón, La Habana 1972, p. 270

(37) **Anuario Estadistico de Cuba 1981**, Comite Estatal de Estadisticas, La Habana 1982, p. 238
See also **Anuario Estadistico de Cuba** 1985, op. cit, p.487

(38) In the academic year 1955-56, enrolment in the 145 private high schools was 11,740. (See **Estadisticas de los Centros Secundarios en la República de Cuba, Curso 1955-56**, La Habana 1956.) Of these, 4,453 were girls and 7,287 were boys.

(39) **Boletin Estadistico 1971**, op. cit.

(40) **Anuario Estadistico de Cuba 1981**, op. cit., p. 238. Also **Anuario Estadisticvo de Cuba 1985**, op. cit, p. 487

(41) **Boletin Estadistico 1971**, op. cit. This does not include private business schools, which, according to generous Cuban estimates, enrolled as many as 5000 students nationwide.

(42) **Anuario Estadstico de Cuba 1981**, op. cit., p. 238. Also see **Anuario Estadistico de Cuba 1985**, op. cit, p. 487

(43) Interview with René Ochoa, Vice-Rector, University of Havana, Feb. 19, 1984. See also **Anuario Estadistico de Cuba 1985**, op. cit, p. 487

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(44) See Table A at the beginning of Section 1.3.1.2 (page). The estimated population on December 31, 1981 was 9.7 million (**Anuario Estadistico de Cuba 1981**, op. cit., p. 48)

(45) **Boletin del Ministerio de Educación**, MINED 1967. This figure excludes the budget for private educational institutions.

(46) Ibid. All private schools had been nationalized in 1961.

(47) **Cuba: Organizacion de la Educacion 1978-80** (Report of the Republic of Cuba to the 38th International Conference on Public Education, Geneva 1981), MINED, La Habana, p. 81.

(48) **Boletin Estadistico 1967**, JUCEPLAN, Havana, p.152

(49) Ibid

(50) **Anuario Estadistico de Cuba 1981**, op. cit., pp. 241-246. The scholarships were divided as follows: primary 46,366; general secondary 340,844; technical and professional middle level education 104,041; teacher training 24,560; university 39,989.

(51) Armando Hart Dávalos, **Changing the Rules of the Game**, Editorial Letras Cubanas, Havana, 1983, p. 74. Hart is now the Cuban Minister of Culture; he was Minister of Education from 1959 to 1965.

(52) Among the plants turned over to the production of textbooks was the Omega Press where the Spanish edition of **Readers' Digest** had been published for Latin American distribution.

(53) Armando Hart, Minister of Culture, quoted in **Granma**, Nov. 1, 1982.

(54) Quoted in **Hoy**, March 13, 1965.

(55) **Boletin Estadistico 1971** op. cit., p.268

(56) No statistics are availble for the number of private school primary-level teachers in 1959. Knowing that there were 120,000 private school students at the primary level allows us to extrapolate, using the same teacher-student ratio as that found in the government-run schools, i.e. 1 teacher for every 33.5 students. This

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gives a figure of 3582 private school teachers. This may, however, be an **underestimation** as most private schools were small with a low student-teacher ratio.

(57) **La Educación en Cuba, No. 1,** MINED, Havana, Dec. 1, 1962.

(58) **Anuario Estadistico de 1981,** op. cit., p. 237

(59) Fidel Castro, speech August 29, 1960 (See **Obras Revolucionarias 1960,** Imprenta Nacional, La Habana, September 9, 1960)

(60) Ibid

(61) See **Obras Revolucionarias 1961,** Imprenta Nacional, La Habana, January 25, 1961, for speeches at the graduation ceremony made by Fidel Castro and by the Minister of Education, Armando Hart.

(62) Fidel Castro, speech December 22, 1961. (See **Obras Revolucionarias 1961,** op. cit.)

(63) Ibid

(64) Unpublished interview with Manuel Dehesa, one of the founders of the Minas del Frio school, by Lionel Martin, Jan. 20, 1970, Havana. (Lionel Martin is an American journalist who has lived and worked in Cuba since March 1961.)

(65) Unpublished interview with Berta Ugidos, Pedagogical Director of the Tarara School, by Lionel Martin, March 1970.

(66) Unpublished interview with Elena Gil, General-Director of the "Plan for the Improvement of Women", by Lionel Martin, March 14, 1970.

(67) Ibid

(68) Ibid

(69) In a speech made on December 7, 1963, Fidel Castro speaks of the great skepticism on the part of some professional educators concerning the plan to use the 300 girls as teachers in the second-cycle teacher-training programme at Tarara.

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(67) Ibid

(68) Ibid

(69) In a speech made on December 7, 1963, Fidel Castro speaks of the great skepticism on the part of some professional educators concerning the plan to use the 300 girls as teachers in the second-cycle teacher-training programme at Tarara.

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(70) These teacher trainees were called the "Makarenkos" after A.S. Makarenko, a Soviet pedagogue whose book **Road to Life**, about his experiences as director of a rural school for orphans and delinquents following the Russian Revolution of 1917, was widely read in Cuba.

(71) Interview with Elena Gil, op. cit. These teachers were commonly known as "Los Mayitos", in honour of the First of May, the international holiday for workers.

(72) In 1972, fewer than one-third of Cuba's primary and junior high school teachers had teaching diplomas. (See Fidel Castro's speech of April 4, 1972.)

(73) **Granma**, Jan. 29, 1982

(74) In 1963, ISE changed its name -- but not its initials -- to the Instituto de Superación Educacional (Institute of In-Service Teacher Training), and in 1976 -- once more in keeping with its changing role -- became the Instituto de Perfeccionamiento Educacional -- IPE -- (Institute of Educational Improvement).

(75) Until the end of the 1960's, teachers were given one day a week off to attend classes. Since then, it has been one day every two weeks for those working towards a degree; for everyone, 15-day seminars are given in the summer for training and improvement.

(76) Between 1962 and 1964, teacher-training courses were offered for prospective junior and senior high school teachers which laid the basis for the institutes organized in 1964. In 1962, 709 students were enrolled as future junior high school teachers, and 389 were enrolled as future senior high school teachers. In 1963, the numbers increased to 985 and 1,812, and in 1964, to 1,724 and 2,079 respectively. (**Boletin Estadistico 1967**, op. cit., p. 147)

(77) Armando Hart, Minister of Education, March 13, 1965, (printed in a pamphlet published by the Ministry of Education, Havana, Cuba, 1965.)

(78) Interview with Luis Davidson, National Technical Advisor, MINED, March 11, 1984.

(79) The first seven of the "schools in the countryside" (escuelas en el campo) were opened in 1971. By 1981, there were 416 junior high schools in the countryside and 157 senior high schools.

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(80) **Plan Ceiba, Secundaria Básica en el Campo**, pamphlet published by the Ministry of Education, Havana, no date of publication given.

(81) The name of this pedagogical detachment is the "Destacamento Pedagógico Manuel Asunce Domenech" named after a young literacy campaign teacher who was murdered by a counter-revolutionary band in 1961.

(82) The graduation figures for the five contingents, given in **Granma**, July 9, 1981, are as follows:
- 1977: Contingent 1 - 907
- 1978: Contingent 2 - 2,122
- 1979: Contingent 3 - 3,333
- 1980: Contingent 4 - 5,820
- 1981: Contingent 5 - 4,895)

(83) Fidel Castro, speech to the graduating classes of the pedagogical institutes, July 7, 1981. In his speech, President Castro qualified the graduation as "historic".

(84) Ibid

(85) Ibid

(86) **Cuba: Organizacion de la Educación 1978-80**, op. cit.

(87) Speech by Fidel Castro on April 4, 1972. In the same speech, the Cuban prime minister said, "... we should be gratified that so many persons understand the importance of studying foreign languages ...", but then went on to lament the fact that too few were enrolling in agricultural and technical courses.

(88) Interview with Marta Santo Tomas, Feb. 10, 1984, op. cit. The Centro Norteamericano in Santiago de Cuba was renamed and became the Centro Maceo-Lincoln. Maceo was a black general who fought in Cuba's wars of independence against Spain. He died in battle in 1896.

(89) The English department was headed by Dr. Rosa Antich, whose title was "Asesora Nacional de Inglés" (National Inspector of English). She was assisted from the beginning by a second national inspector, Marjorie Moray (an American), and later by a third national inspector, Maria Amalia Romero. In 1963, the department became part of the Dirección de Planeamiento y Inspección Técnica.

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(90) In 1988, there were 5,384 English teachers employed by the Ministry of Education (MINED) throughout the republic. Of these, 2, 235 were teaching in junior high schools (Grades 7 - 9); 1,440 were teaching in senior high schools (Grades 10 - 12); the remaining 1,709 were teachers in technological schools, and pedagogical institutes, including ISPLE. These unpublished statistics were provided by Jema Villa, Department of Statistics, MINED, August 1988.

(91) This practice of "pirating" ceased in the late 1970's after Cuba became part of the international copyright convention, and herself began to sell books on the international market.

(92) Many of the island's English teachers could not participate in the Literacy Campaign for one reason or another, and so were incorporated into the teacher training programme while classes were cancelled and their students took part as literacy teachers.

(93) The cities where courses were held were: Havana (in the 3 districts of Vedado, Marianao, and La Vibora); Matanzas; Santa Clara; Pinar del Rio; Ciego de Avila; Camaguey; Santiago de Cuba; Manzanillo; Holguin; Bayâmo; Guantânamo.

(94) Pablo Lafargue is better known as Paul Lafarge, the son-in-law of Karl Marx. He was born of French parents in Cuba but was educated in France where he became a well-known political writer and activist who espoused Marxist ideas.

(95) Interview with Dr. Rosa Antich, April 5, 1983. Dr. Antich, who was still National Technical Advisor in English at the time of the experiment, recalls that the students made serious errors. For example, she remembers "circulo infantil", which means "creche" or "day care centre", being translated as "infantile circle"; or the phrase "el Generalisimo Màximo Gòmez being translated as "the very general Màximo Gòmez".

(96) Ibid

(97) See page 57 for an explanation of the Pedagogical Detachment. These Grade 10 graduates, who were trained to become English teachers while actually teaching students in the junior high schools in the countryside, followed a teacher training programme that included learning English by the Alexander'S **First Things First.**

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(98) This figure of 9 did not include several branches of some of the higher pedagogical institutes, such as the one on the Isle of Youth which was attached to the Enrique José Varona Higher Pedagogical Institute in Havana. In addition to Havana with its Isle of Youth campus, institutes were found in the provinces of Pinar del Rio, Matanzas, Villa Clara, Camaguey, Granma, Holguin, Tunas, Santiago de Cuba, and Guantánamo.

(99) In 1982, all training of translators and interpreters became the sole responsibility of the University of Havana.

(100) Interview with Roger Doswell, Chief Technical Adviser, ILO/WTO Tourism Training and Development Project in Cuba, March 28, 1983. (ILO = International Labour Organization; WTO = World Tourism Organization)

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

(1) CUJAE changed its name to ISPJAE (Instituto Superior Politécnico, or Higher Polytechnic Institute, José Antonio Echeverria) in 1976 when it was made a separate, independent tertiary-level institute as a result of the reorganization of education, and the subsequent creation of the new Ministry of Higher Education. As explained in the notes to the Introduction, this institute will be referred to as ISPJAE throughout this thesis.

(2) The genesis of the master's degree programme for engineers is described in the **CUJAE Project Final Report** (CUSO 1977) written by a commission headed by Dr. A. N. Sherbourne. This report is referred to as **The Sherbourne Report 1977.**

(3) **The Sherbourne Report 1977**

(4) Any open defiance by U.S.-controlled firms in Canada received wide publicity because it was so rare. One such case was that of M.L.W. Worthington Ltd., based in the province of Quebec, which, in 1974, sold 18 railroad locomotives to Cuba. The parent corporation in the U.S.A. tried to prevent the sale, but the Canadian government upheld the right of the Canadian subsidiary to complete the transaction.

(5) Prior to 1964, engineering in Cuba was taught at the three state universities. In Havana, it was taught at the downtown campus of the University of Havana. However, in December 1964, the Havana Faculty of Technology moved to a new campus on the outskirts of the city called CUJAE. In 1976, the Faculty of Technology at CUJAE became a separate higher institute and was renamed ISPJAE.

(6) These statistics were cited by the then rector of ISPJAE, Rodolfo Alarcón, in an interview published in **Cuba Internacional**, November 1983.

(7) Inasmuch as the U.S. had severed diplomatic ties and clamped down an economic boycott on Cuba, the Cuban Ministry of Education claimed it had the moral right to pirate American textbooks in retaliation for the damage the embargo was doing to their economy.

(8) It was only in the late 1970's that some English teachers from Cuba began to go abroad to study in their field or for short exchange visits; this was almost exclusively to Eastern European countries, e.g. Hungary, East Germany, the USSR, etc., although in the 1980's more

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

began to go to Guyana to attend teacher-training courses at the University of Georgetown.

(9) In Cuba, English courses given to students studying at a postgraduate level (e.g. engineers doing a master's degree in engineering or a scientist doing a PhD) are referred to as "postgraduate English courses" regardless of the level of English being taught, be it for beginners, for people at an intermediate or advanced level. In this thesis, this same terminology is used with the same meaning.

(10) The Canadian teachers were: David Gallagher (the original coordinator until September 1973); Adrienne Hunter (coordinator from Sept. 1973 to the end of Phase I); May Ann Kainola; Judith Ransom; Charles Carrington; Sheila Katz; Suzanne Daoust; Helga Stefansson; Frances Gorbet. Only Adrienne Hunter and May Ann Kainola participated throughout the whole of Phase I, and Adrienne Hunter was the only one to participate in the English programme at ISPJAE during the entire ten-year period covered in this thesis.

(11) Until 1967, Richard Handscombe had been the Associate Organizer (Research) in the Nuffield Foreign Languages Teaching Materials Project in the U.K. in charge of the Child Language Survey.

(12) **The Turners** was being used at the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Commerce (MINCEX) Language School. **First Things First** was being used to train English teachers at the Pedagogical Institutes. The Filipovich-Webster course was being used at both CNIC and the University of Havana; at the latter, it formed the basis of the training programme for linguists and translator-interpreters in the B.A. programme (Licenciatura).

(13) This reflected the real student population at ISPJAE at the time: one in every three students studying engineering was a woman.

(14) At this time, only CNIC and ISPJAE offered English courses to postgraduates; the Faculty of Medicine was to begin in September 1975. The other centres were either concerned with training English teachers for secondary school, or in the case of the Ministry of Foreign Trade, with preparing people to go abroad where they would need English as a lingua franca.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

(15) This meeting was attended by the author and Gisela Hernández from ISPJAE, as well as Madeleine Monte representing CNIC, and Marjorie Moore, who was about to set up the postgraduate English programme at the Faculty of Medicine in Havana. (With the restructuring of education in 1976, the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Havana became -- like ISPJAE -- a separate, independent institution of higher learning and was named the Higher Institute of Medical Sciences - Havana (ISCM-H - Instituto Superior de Ciencias Médicas - Habana)

(16) In connection with the practice of verbs, there is a section in the basic textbook used for these courses, **Using English**, (written by Marjorie Moore) which is devoted to interviews. These are conducted by the students in pairs. Each interview concentrates on the practice of a particular verb tense. In addition, there is another activity in the courses where the students practise translating -- into Spanish -- English sentences which contain different tenses of the most frequently-occurring irregular English verbs.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

(1) In the case of Cuban students, the late 1960's and early 1970's saw a limited number of engineering and medical students going abroad to advanced capitalist countries -- notably Britain, Canada, and Sweden -- to do postgraduate work.

(2) In a lecture given by Evelyn Hatch at Edinburgh University in April 1984, she contended that English language teaching methodology in the United States had developed more slowly than in Great Britain, due in great part, to the influence of behaviourism and then later to the ideas of Noam Chomsky.

(3) It was undoubtedly Palmer who influenced Sorzano Jorrin to introduce courses for specialized English in Cuba between the years 1928 and 1930.

(4) Conversation between Dr. Allen and Adrienne Hunter, March 23, 1977.

(5) See **Report on Dr. J.P.B.Allen's Visit to Cuba, March 17-24, 1977** by Adrienne Hunter to Ambassador James Hyndman, Canadian Embassy, Havana, June 1, 1977.

(6) This was the period in which the author was the only remaining Canadian teacher in the English programme at ISPJAE, so in addition to Gisela Hernandez, the head of the postgraduate English programme, two teachers from outside ISPJAE were contracted specifically to teach this course: Silvia Pérez and Margaret Sanchez White.

(7) Such zeroing-in on pronunciation problems for the Spanish speaker was possible, of course, because of the homogeneous nature of the group, a situation which had been totally different in Toronto where the author had dealt with groups of 20 people or more of as many as 20 different nationalities and languages.

(8) Report to José Lo Kim, Head English Dept., ISPJAE, from A. Hunter, June 10, 1977: **Report on the Postgraduate English Course for 'Especialistas' 76-77.**

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

(1) In order to avoid confusion, we have used the name of ISPJAE, rather than a mixture of CUJAE AND ISPJAE, throughout this thesis.

(2) University-level enrolment rose as a whole from approximately 25,000 in 1959 to 84,750 in 1976. No published figure is available for Engineering for the 1975-1976 academic year. However according to the **Anuario Estadistico de Cuba - 1983** published by the Cuban State Committee on Statistics, page 402, the enrolment in Engineering and Architecture in the 1976-77 academic year was 20,547.

(3) This situation changed after Lo Kim was replaced as chairman of the Sub-Commission in early 1980.

(4) Marjorie Moore, a U.S. citizen, was married to a Cuban and had lived in Cuba since the early 1950's. She had been head of the English Department at the medical school in Havana until 1978, but was substituted by Isabel Sagó due to new directive of the Ministry of Public Health which stipulated that only Cuban citizens could hold administrative positions.

(5) There was one textbook for each of the four semesters: two semesters in each of the two years. The materials produced were very much influenced by both the **Nucleus** and **Focus** series.

(6) For several years, Professor Hermosilla, a veteran Chilean-born French teacher, was the promotor and organizer of professional development courses and seminars for language teachers in Havana.

(7) Suzanne Daoust originally went to Cuba in 1974 as part of the CUSO team at ISPJAE. She returned to Canada in 1981 with her Cuban husband.

(8) In the 1979-80 academic year, there were 94 langugage schools under the Ministry of Education throughout the country. See **Anuario Estadistico de Cuba - 1983**, Havana.

(9) Gisela Hernández had been made Course Director of First Year in September 1978 and, as such, was responsible for all the methodological work related to the first-year course. In September 1980, she was released from all teaching duties to work with a team of three textbook-writers on the writing of new books for all first-year university English courses which came

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Higher Education, MES. These books were commissioned by the National Sub-Commission for the Teaching of English. The other members of this textbook-writing team were Carmen Jubrias, and the leader of the team, Liana de Armas.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

(1) The Course Director for first year throughout the entire two-year field study was Carmen Sam, who took over from Gisela Hernández in September 1980 when Professor Hernández was released from all teaching duties to join a team of three textbook-writers. The job of this team was to write the new textbooks for first-year university English throughout the country. Both Professors Hernández and Sam were counterparts of the author, one from 1972 to 1980; the other from 1976 to the end of the field study in July 1982.

(2) In addition, elements of the experimental approach were introduced into the second year materials under the guidance of Mario Castillo, a veteran teacher in the department who had produced some very good materials for the field study, and was enthusiastic about making changes in the second-year course. He was therefore moved in July 1981 from the first-year team to undertake this task. This was seen as an excellent way to further familiarize and train the second-year teachers in the approach. Another teacher from the first-year team was also transferred to second year to help in this process, and two of the second-year teachers took their places in first year, where they had an opportunity to benefit more directly from the experimental work going on in the field study.

(3) There were 24 classes in each of the two semesters of first year, making a total of 48 classes.

(4) Interview with Mario Castillo, March 21, 1984. Castillo became the first English teacher in the Language Department at ISPJAE to undertake a doctoral candidacy -- an indication of his continuing interest in the field -- which he completed in the spring of 1988 in Leipzig, Germany. The topic of his thesis was related to functional-notional syllabuses.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

(1) Interview with Colin Barron, Edinburgh, Scotland, Nov. 17, 1982. Barron told the author, however, that he and Ian Stewart never finished the first-level book on **Chemistry** after they left Iran because they felt that the **Nucleus** format was out of date by 1978.

(2) Interview with Mercedes Sorzano, Havana, Cuba, Feb. 8, 1984.

(3) Talk given by Dr. Naiman at ISCM-H, April 12, 1988.

(4) Interview with Tony Irizar, head of the English language programme in Cuban tourism, Havana, May 21, 1988.

(5) The teachers who gave these opinions included Carmen Sam, Nuria Rabionet, Mario Castillo, Mercedes Sorzano, Gloria Moreno, Mercedes López, Gisela Gonzalez and Hortensia Bernal.

(6) The teacher who challenged these allegations was Francisca Castano, from the Enrique José Varona Pedagogical Institute (ISPEJV).

(7) Even as late as 1988 at least one high-level English language teaching policy-maker was claiming that the communicative approach is "behaviourist" and therefore not in accord with the Marxist philosophical outlook. There had not been any attempt, however, to support these charges with a systematic and scientific analysis.

(8) The third member of the team, and its leader, was Liana de Armas from the University of Havana. She had had no experience with a communicative approach to English language teaching.

NOTES TO THE EPILOGUE

(1) The information regarding the introduction of the **Kernel** series into the medical school English programme was given to the author by Samuel Toirac in an interview on Sept. 9, 1988. Toirac is President of the National Methodological Commission for English of the Ministry of Public Health.

(2) The Central Committee authorized the use of the **Kernel** series for ten years.

(3) It was only possible to initiate the Distance Learning Course in the 1987-88 academic year because of a donation of 21 sets of seven books, made by the British Embassy in Havana, with the backing of Ambassador Andrew Palmer. One set was placed in each of the 21 medical faculties throughout the country. The authors and titles of these books (which are listed in the bibliography) are:

- Abbott and Wingard: **The Teaching of English as an International Language**
- Brown and Yule: **Teaching the Spoken Language**
- Bryne, D.: **Teaching Oral English**
- Finocchario & Brumfit: **The Functional-Notional Approach**
- Leech & Svartvik: **A Communicative Grammar of English**
- McDonough, S.H.: **Psychology in Foreign Language Teaching**
- Tench, P.: **Pronunciation Skills**

In the 1988-89 year, again thanks to the generosity of the British government, two more texts were added to each set as reference texts:

- Howatt, A.P.R.: **A History of English Language Teaching**
- Stern, H .H.: **Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching**

(4) The textbooks, **Effective Reading in English** were co-authored by Gisela Hernandez, who had been the author's counterpart at ISPJAE between the years 1972 and 1980. Another co-author was Carmen Jubrias who had taken the 48-hour EST course given in 1975 and who had subsequently introduced certain discoursal features from the **Focus** series into courses at the University of Havana where she was professor. The third member, and head of the team, was Liana de Armas.

(5) The authors of the second-year textbooks were Mercedes Sorzano and Alice Felix.

NOTES TO THE EPILOGUE

(6) English is taught at the Centre for Tourist Studies in Havana. This centre also organizes English language classes at the three polytechnical schools of the tourist industry which are located in Havana, Varadero and Santiago de Cuba. In addition, the Centre runs English classes in most of the big hotels in all of Cuba's fourteen provinces.

(7) Interview with Antonio Irizar, August 28, 1988.

(8) See Dr. Patrick Allen's report, 1977, page 8.

(9) In the mid-1980's, it was decided to phase out the teaching of Russian -- which had only begun in 1979 -- in all but a few of Cuba's secondary schools. As of 1987, most of these teachers were being retrained as English teachers.

(10) Interview with Madeleine Monte, August 25, 1988.

(11) As a case in point, the Rector of ISPJAE invited the author to a meeting in September 1987 to discuss ways that a major oral element could be introduced into the English courses for engineering students that were, up to that time, exlusively concerned with reading.

(12) In 1988, there were 5384 English teachers employed by the Ministry of Education (MINED) throughout the republic. (See Note 90 of Notes to Chapter One.)

(13) Interview with Madeleine Monte, op. cit.